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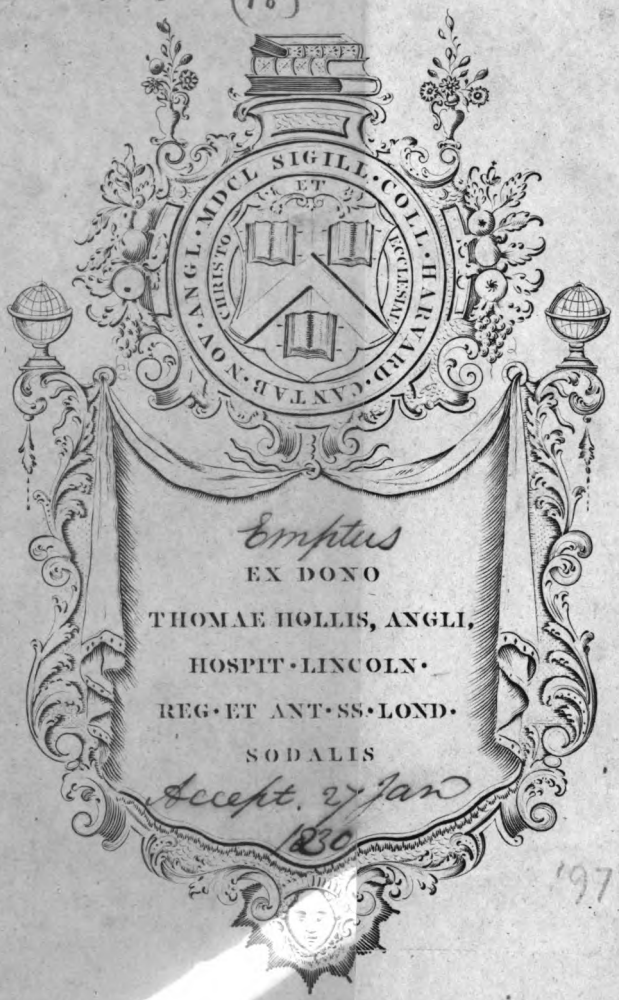

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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN.

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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN,

NOW FIRST COLLECTED

IN EIGHTEEN VOLUMES.

ILLUSTRATED

WITH NOTES,

HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND EXPLANATORY,

AND

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

SECOND EDITION.

VOL. XVIII.

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PREFACE

TO

A DIALOGUE CONCERNING WOMEN;

BEING

A DEFENCE OF THE SEX,

ADDRESSED TO EUGENIA, BY WILLIAM WALSH, ESQ.
8vo, 1691.

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PREFACE

TO

A DIALOGUE CONCERNING WOMEN.

THE author of this Dialogue, as Dr Johnson has observed, was more remarkable for his familiarity with men of genius, than for any productions of his own. He was the son of Joseph Walsh of Abberley, in Worcestershire, and was born to an easy fortune. This last circumstance may have contributed something to the extreme respect in which he seems to have been held by the most accomplished of his age. Dryden, in the Postscript to "Virgil," calls Walsh the best critic of the English nation; and, in the following Preface, he is profuse in his commendation. But though these praises may have exceeded the measure of Walsh's desert, posterity owe a grateful remembrance to him, who, though a staunch Whig, respected and befriended Dryden in age and adversity, and who encouraged the juvenile essays of Pope, by foretelling his future eminence. Walsh's own Poems and Essays entitle him to respectable rank among the minor poets. His Essay on the Pastorals of Virgil, which he contributed to our author's version, may be found, Vol. XIII. p. 345.

The "Dialogue concerning Women," contains a critical disquisition upon the virtues and foibles of the sex. But though the pleasantry be stale, and the learning pedantic, it seems to have excited some attention when published; perhaps because, as an angry defender of the ladies observes,

> ———"To begin with Dryden's dreadful name,
> Should mark out something of no common fame."

I cannot omit remarking, that the Dialogue concludes with a profuse panegyric, upon a theme not very congenial to Dryden's political feelings, the character of Queen Mary.

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PREFACE

TO

WALSH'S DIALOGUE

CONCERNING WOMEN.

THE perusal of this Dialogue, in defence of the fair sex, written by a gentleman of my acquaintance, much surprised me; for it was not easy for me to imagine, that one so young* could have treated so nice a subject with so much judgment. It is true, I was not ignorant that he was naturally ingenious, and that he had improved himself by travelling; and from thence I might reasonably have expected that air of gallantry, which is so visibly diffused through the body of the work, and is indeed the soul that animates all things of this nature; but so much variety of reading, both in ancient and modern authors, such digestion of that reading, so much justness of thought, that it leaves

* Mr Walsh was born in 1663, and in 1691 must have been twenty-eight years old. Still he was but a youth in the eyes of Dryden, who was now advanced in life.

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no room for affectation or pedantry, I may venture to say, are not over-common amongst practised writers, and very rarely to be found amongst beginners. It puts me in mind of what was said of Mr Waller, the father of our English numbers, upon the sight of his first verses, by the wits of the last age; that he came out into the world forty thousand strong, before they heard of him.* Here, in imitation of my friend's apostrophes, I hope the reader need not be told, that Mr Waller is only mentioned for honour's sake; that I am desirous of laying hold on his memory on all occasions, and thereby acknowledging to the world, that unless he had written, none of us could write.

I know, my friend will forgive me this digression; for it is not only a copy of his style, but of his candour. The reader will observe, that he is ready for all hints of commending merit, and the writers of this age and country are particularly obliged to him, for his pointing out those passages which the French call *beaux endroits*, wherein they

---

* Mr Malone observes, that, according to Antony Wood, (*Ath. Oxon.* ii. 423,) this was not said *of* Waller, but *by* that poet, of Sir John Denham.—"In the latter end of the year 1641, Sir John published the tragedy called the 'Sophy,' which took extremely much, and was admired by all ingenious men, particularly by Edmund Waller of Beaconsfield, who then said of the author, that he broke out, like the Irish rebellion, threescore thousand strong, before any body was aware, or the least suspected it." Mr Malone adds, that the observation is more applicable to Denham than to Waller; for Denham, from the age of sixteen, when he went to Trinity College, in Oxford, November 18, 1631, to the time of his father's death, January 6, 1638-9, was considered as a dull and dissipated young man; whereas Waller distinguished himself, as a poet, before he was eighteen. Besides, the "Sophy" was published just when the Irish rebellion broke out.

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have most excelled. And though I may seem in this to have my own interest in my eyes, because he has more than once mentioned me* so much to my advantage, yet I hope the reader will take it only for a parenthesis, because the piece would have been very perfect without it. I may be suffered to please myself with the kindness of my friend, without valuing myself upon his partiality; he had not confidence enough to send it out into the world, without my opinion of it, that it might pass securely, at least amongst the fair readers, for whose service it was principally designed. I am not so presuming to think my opinion can either be his touchstone, or his passport; but I thought I might send him back to Ariosto, who has made it the business of almost thirty stanzas, in the beginning of the thirty-seventh book of his "Orlando Furioso," not only to praise that beautiful part of the creation, but also to make a sharp satire on their enemies; to give mankind their own, and to tell them plainly, that from their envy it proceeds, that the virtue and great actions of women are purposely concealed, and the failings of some few amongst them exposed with all the aggravating circumstances of malice. For my own part, who have always been their servant, and have never drawn my pen against them, I had rather see some of them praised extraordinarily, than any of them suffer by detraction; and that in this age, and at this time particularly, wherein I find more heroines than heroes. Let me therefore give them joy of

* In one passage of the Dialogue, our author's version of the sixth satire of Juvenal is mentioned with commendation; and in another, the tragedy of "Aureng-Zebe" is quoted.

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their new champion. If any will think me more partial to him than really I am, they can only say, I have returned his bribe; and the worst I wish him is, that he may receive justice from the men, and favour only from the ladies.

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CHARACTER

OF

M. ST EVREMONT.

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CHARACTER OF ST EVREMONT.

CHARLES DE ST DENIS, Seigneur de St Evremont, was born in 1613, of a noble Norman family, and was early distinguished by the vivacity of his wit, as well as by his gallantry; for, like all the French noblesse, he followed the profession of arms. The Duke D'Enghien, afterwards Prince of Conde, was particularly attached to him, and gave him an appointment in his household. This he lost by ill-timed raillery on his patron. He was committed to the Bastile for a joke on Cardinal Mazerine; and afterwards forced to fly to Holland for writing a satirical history of the peace of the Pyrenees. From Holland St Evremont retreated to England, where, at the witty court of Charles, his raillery was better understood than in Holland, and less likely to incur unpleasant consequences than in France. St Evremont naturally addressed himself to his fair countrywoman Louise de Querouaille Duchess of Portsmouth, and the Duchess of Mazarine; and though they were rivals in Charles's affections, they united in protecting the Norman *bel-esprit*. The king conferred on him a thousand caresses, and a small pension; on which he lived, amusing himself by the composition of lighter pieces of literature, and despising the country, which afforded him refuge, so very thoroughly, that he did not even deign to learn English. The people of England did not, however, consider the labours of their foreign guest with similar apathy. After several surreptitious editions of his various tracts had appeared, there was published, in 1692, a collection entitled, "Miscellaneous Essays, by Monsieur St Evremont, translated out of French; with his character, by a person of honour here in England, continued by Mr Dryden." Desmaiseaux, by whom a complete edition of St Evremont's works was edited in 1705, mentions it as well known, that Dr Knightly Chetwood, who died dean of Gloucester, was the person of honour in the title page of 1692. His connection with Dryden makes this highly probable; although there is reason to believe, that the title of "person of honour" was not strictly applicable, and was probably assumed for the purpose of disguising the real translator.

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CHARACTER

OF

M. ST EVREMONT.

I KNOW how nice an undertaking it is to write of a living author; yet the example of Father Bouhours has somewhat encouraged me in this attempt. Had not Monsieur St Evremont been very considerable in his own country, that famous jesuit would not have ventured to praise a person in disgrace with the government of France, and living here in banishment. Yet, in his "*Pensees Ingenieuses*," he has often cited our author's thoughts and his expressions, as the standard of judicious thinking, and graceful speaking; an undoubted sign that his merit was sufficiently established, when the disfavour of the court could not prevail against it. There is not only a justness in his conceptions, which is the foundation of good writing, but also a purity of language, and a beautiful turn of words, so little understood by modern writers; and which, indeed, was found at Rome but at the latter end of the commonwealth, and ended with Petronius, under the monarchy. If I durst extend my judgment to particulars, I would say, that our author has determined very nicely in his opinion of Epicurus; and

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that what he has said of his morals, is according to nature and reason.

It is true, that as I am a religious admirer of Virgil, I could wish that he had not discovered our father's nakedness.* But, after all, we must confess, that Æneas was none of the greatest heroes, and that Virgil was sensible of it himself. But what could he do? the Trojan on whom he was to build the Roman empire, had been already vanquished; he had lost his country, and was a fugitive. Nay, more, he had fought unsuccessfully with Diomedes, and was only preserved from death by his mother-goddess, who received a wound in his defence. So that Virgil, bound as he was to follow the footsteps of Homer, who had thus described him, could not reasonably have altered his character, and raised him in Italy to a much greater height of prowess than he found him formerly in Troy. Since, therefore, he could make no more of him in valour, he resolved not to give him that virtue, as his principal; but chose another, which was piety. It is true, this latter, in the composition of a hero, was not altogether so shining as the former; but it entitled him more to the favour of the gods, and their protection, in all his undertakings; and, which was the poet's chiefest aim, made a nearer resemblance betwixt Æneas and his patron Augustus Cæsar, who, above all things, loved to be flattered for being pious, both to the gods and his relations. And that very piety, or gratitude, (call it which you please,) to the memory of his uncle Julius, gave him the preference, amongst the soldiers, to Mark Antony; and, consequently, raised him to the empire.

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* St Evremont wrote "Observations on Segrais' Translation of Virgil."

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As for personal courage, that of Augustus was not pushing;* and the poet, who was not ignorant of that defect, for that reason durst not ascribe it, in the supreme degree, to him who was to represent his emperor under another name: which was managed by him with the most imaginable fineness; for had valour been set uppermost, Augustus must have yielded to Agrippa. After all, this is rather to defend the courtier than the poet; and to make his hero escape again, under the covert of a cloud. Only we may add, what I think Bossu says, that the Roman commonwealth being now changed into a monarchy, Virgil was helping to that design; by insinuating into the people the piety of their new conqueror, to make them the better brook this innovation, which was brought on them by a man who was favoured by the gods. Yet we may observe, that Virgil forgot not, upon occasion, to speak honourably of Æneas, in point of courage, and that particularly in the person of him by whom he was overcome. For Diomedes compares him with Hector, and even with advantage:

Quicquid apud duræ cessatum est mœnia Trojæ,
Hectoris Æneæque manu victoria Graiûm
Hæsit, et in decimum vestigia retulit annum:
Ambo animis, ambo insignes præstantibus armis;
Hic pietate prior.

As for that particular passage, cited by Monsieur

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* ——"He at Philippi kept
His sword even like a dancer;——
——he alone
Dealt on lieutenancy, and no practice had
In the brave squares of war."
Antony and Cleopatra.

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St Evremont, where Æneas shews the utmost fear, in the beginning of a tempest,

Extemplo Æneæ solvuntur frigore membra, &c.

why may it not be supposed, that, having been long at sea, he might be well acquainted with the nature of a storm; and, by the rough beginning, foresee the increase and danger of it? at least, as a father of his people, his concernment might be greater for them than for himself: and if so, what the poet takes from the merit of his courage, is added to the prime virtue of his character, which was his piety. Be this said with all manner of respect and deference to the opinion of Monsieur St Evremont; amongst whose admirable talents, that of penetration is not the least. He generally dives into the very bottom of his authors; searches into the inmost recesses of their souls, and brings up with him those hidden treasures which had escaped the diligence of others. His examination of the "*Grand Alexandre*,"* in my opinion, is an admirable piece of criticism; and I doubt not, but that his observations on the English theatre had been as absolute in their kind, had he seen with his own eyes, and not with those of other men. But conversing in a manner wholly with the court, which is not always the truest judge, he has been unavoidably led into mistakes, and given to some of our coarsest poets a reputation abroad, which they never had at home.

* A tragedy by Racine. St Evremont, in a dissertation on this play, addressed to Madame Borneau, severely reprobates the fault so common in French tragedy, of making a play, though the scene is laid in ancient Rome or India, centre and turn upon Parisian manners. He concludes, that Corneille is the only author of the nation that displays a true taste for antiquity.

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Had his conversation in the town been more general, he had certainly received other ideas on that subject, and not transmitted those names into his own country, which will be forgotten by posterity in ours.

Thus I have contracted my thoughts on a large subject; for whatever has been said, falls short of the true character of Monsieur St Evremont, and his writings: and if the translation you are about to read does not every where come up to the original, the translator desires you to believe, that it is only because that he has failed in his undertaking.

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THE

CHARACTER OF POLYBIUS.

FIRST PRINTED IN OCTAVO, IN 1692.

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CHARACTER OF POLYBIUS.

THE character of Polybius was prefixed to a translation executed by Sir Henry Shere, or Sheers;* the same gentleman whom Dryden has elsewhere classed among the "finer spirits of the age." † Our author had announced this work to the public in the preface to "Cleomenes." ‡ It was probably at that time under the press, or at least subjected to Dryden for his correction. The translation itself is of little value. Sir Henry disclaims all extent of erudition, and frankly confesses, he "has no warrant from his depth of learning whereof to make ostentation; wherein, indeed, he who most abounds ever finds least cause of boasting." Accordingly, his preface is employed in an attempt to convince the world, that mere scholars, or book-learned men, have rather traduced than translated Polybius, and most authors of his class; such being totally at a loss to discover the sense of many passages in history, wherein matters military and naval are handled. He therefore takes up the pen as a man of the world, of business, science, and conversation, long intimate with such matters as are principally treated of by the historian. Finally, he describes his undertaking as an "employment, wherein he who performs best, trafficks for small gain, and it would be unfair and unconscionable to make the loss more than the adventure; and, at the worst, it having been rather a diversion than a task, helping me to while away a few winter hours, which is some recreation to one who has led a life of action and business; and

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* The full title is, "The history of Polybius the Megalopolitan; containing a general Account of the Transactions of the World, and principally of the Roman People during the first and second Punic Wars. Translated by Sir H. S. To which is added a Character of Polybius and his Writings, by Mr Dryden, 1693.

† Where he enumerates the Translators of Lucian in the Supplement to his Life.

‡ Vol. VIII. p. 203.

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whose humour and fortune suit not with the pleasures of the town. Wherefore I shall have little cause of complaint, if my well-meaning in consenting to its publication be not so well received: I have been worse treated by the world, to which I am as little indebted as most men, who have spent near thirty years in public trusts; wherein I laboured, and wasted my youth and the vigour of my days, more to the service of my country, and the impairment of my health, than the improvement of my fortune; having stood the mark of envy, slander, and hard usage, without gleaning the least of those advantages, which use to be the anchor-hold and refuge of such as wrongfully or otherwise suffer the stroke of censure."

Our author, who seems to have had an especial regard for Sir Henry Shere, contributed this preliminary discourse.

Mr Malone has fixed Sir Henry Shere's death to the year 1713, when his library was exposed to sale by advertisement in "The Guardian."

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THE

CHARACTER OF POLYBIUS,

AND

HIS WRITINGS.

THE worthy author of this translation, who is very much my friend, was pleased to entrust it in my hands for many months together, before he published it, desiring me to review the English, and to correct what I found amiss; which he needed not have done, if his modesty would have given him leave to have relied on his own abilities, who is so great a master of our style and language, as the world will acknowledge him to be, after the reading of this excellent version.

It is true, that Polybius has formerly appeared in an English dress,* but under such a cloud of errors

* "History of Polybius, the five first bookes entire, with all the parcels of subsequent bookes unto the eighteenth, according to the Greeke original. Also, the manner of the Romane encamping. Translated into English, by Edward Grimestone, sergeant at armes." Lonulon, 1634. Folio.

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in his first translation, that his native beauty was not only hidden, but his sense perverted in many places; so that he appeared unlike himself, and unworthy of that esteem which has always been paid him by antiquity, as the most sincere, the clearest, and most instructive of all historians. He is now not only redeemed from those mistakes, but also restored to the first purity of his conceptions; and the style in which he now speaks is as plain and unaffected as that he wrote. I had only the pleasure of reading him in a fair manuscript, without the toil of alteration; at least it was so very inconsiderable, that it only cost me the dash of a pen in some few places, and those of very small importance. So much had the care, the diligence, and exactness of my friend prevented my trouble, that he left me not the occasion of serving him, in a work which was already finished to my hands. I doubt not but the reader will approve my judgment. So happy it is for a good author to fall into the hands of a translator, who is of a genius like his own; who has added experience to his natural abilities; who has been educated in business of several kinds; has travelled, like his author, into many parts of the world, and some of them the same with the present scene of history; has been employed in business of the like nature with Polybius, and, like him, is perfectly acquainted not only with the terms of the mathematics, but has searched into the bottom of that admirable science, and reduced into practice the most useful rules of it, to his own honour, and the benefit of his native country; who, besides these advantages, possesses the knowledge of shipping and navigation; and, in few words, is not ignorant of any thing that concerns the tactics; so that here, from the beginning, we are sure of finding nothing that

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is not thoroughly understood.* The expression is clear, and the words adequate to the subject. Nothing in the matter will be mistaken; nothing of the terms will be misapplied; all is natural and proper; and he who understands good sense and English, will be profited by the first, and delighted with the latter. This is what may be justly said in commendation of the translator, and without the note of flattery to a friend.

As for his author, I shall not be ashamed to copy from the learned Casaubon, who has translated him into Latin,† many things which I had not from my own small reading, and which I could not, without great difficulty, have drawn, but from his fountain; not omitting some which came casually in my way, by reading the preface of the Abbot Pichon to the Dauphin's "Tacitus," an admirable and most useful work; which helps I ingenuously profess to have received from them, both to clear myself from being a plagiary of their writings, and to give autho-

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* From these expressions, one would suppose Sir Henry Shere to have been a seaman, which may also be conjectured from his writing an "Essay on the Certainty and Causes of the Earth's Motion on its Axis;" and a "Discourse concerning the Mediterranean Sea and the Straits of Gibraltar;" the one published in 1698, the other in 1705. The naval and military professions were, however, formerly accounted less absolutely distinct branches of service than at present. Many officers distinguished themselves in both. Mr Malone may therefore be right in conjecturing Sir Henry Shere to have been a soldier, though his studies would argue him a seaman or engineer.

† *Polybii Lycortæ F. Megalopolitæ Historiarum Libri, qui supersunt Gr. Lat. Isaacus Casaubonus, ex antiquis libris emendavit, Lat. vertit et commentariis illustravit. Accessit Æneæ vetustissimi Tactici commentarius de toleranda obsidione. Isaacus Casaubonus primus vulgavit, Latinam interpretationem ac notas adjecit. Parisiis*, 1609, *Folio.*

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rity, by their names, to the weakness of my own performance.

The taking of Constantinople, by Mahomet the Great, fell into the latter times of Pope Nicholas the Fifth,* a pope not only studious of good letters,

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* "The fame of Nicholas the Fifth, (who sat in the papal chair from 1447 to 1455,) has not," says Mr Gibbon,—(*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vi. 429, 4to.) "been adequate to his merits. From a plebeian origin, he raised himself, by his virtue and learning. The character of the man prevailed over the interests of the pope; and he sharpened those weapons, which were soon pointed against the Roman church. He had been the friend of the most eminent scholars of the age; he became their patron; and such was the humility of his manners, that the change was scarcely discernible, either to them or to himself. If he pressed the acceptance of a liberal gift, it was not as the measure of desert, but as the proof of benevolence; and when modest merit declined his bounty, 'Accept it,' would he say, with a consciousness of his own worth; 'you will not always have a Nicholas among ye.' The influence of the holy see pervaded Christendom; and he exerted that influence in the search, not of benefices, but of books. From the ruins of the Byzantine libraries, from the darkest monasteries of Germany and Britain, he collected the dusty manuscripts of the writers of antiquity; and wherever the original could not be removed, a faithful copy was transcribed, and transmitted for his use. The Vatican, the old repository for bulls and legends, for superstition and forgery, was daily replenished with more precious furniture; and such was the industry of Nicholas, that, in a reign of eight years, he formed a library of five thousand volumes. To his munificence, the Latin world was indebted for the versions of Xenophon, Diodorus, Polybius, Thucydides, Herodotus, and Appian; of Strabo's Geography; of the Iliad; of the most valuable works of Plato and Aristotle; of Ptolemy and Theophrastus; and of the fathers of the Greek church. The example of the Roman pontiff was preceded, or imitated, by a Florentine merchant, who governed the republic without arms, and without a title. Cosmo, of Medicis, was the father of a line of princes, whose name and age are almost synonymous with the restoration of learning. His credit was ennobled into fame; his riches were dedicated to the service of mankind; he corresponded at once with Cairo and London, and a cargo of

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and particularly of history, but also a great encourager of it in others. From the dreadful overthrow of that city, and final subversion of the Greek empire, many learned men escaped, and brought over with them into Italy that treasure of ancient authors,* which, by their unhappiness, we now pos-

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Indian spices and Greek books was imported in the same vessel. The genius and education of his grandson, Lorenzo, rendered him not only a patron, but a judge and candidate in the literary race. In his palace, distress was entitled to relief, and merit to reward. His leisure hours were delightfully spent in the Platonic academy; he encouraged the emulation of Demetrius Chalcocondyles and Angelo Politian; and his active missionary, Janus Lascaris, returned from the East with a treasure of two hundred manuscripts, fourscore of which were as yet unknown in the libraries of Europe. The rest of Italy was animated by a similar spirit, and the progress of the nation repaid the liberality of the princes. The Latins held the exclusive property of their own literature; and these disciples of Greece were soon capable of transmitting and improving the lessons which they had imbibed. After a short succession of foreign teachers, the tide of emigration subsided; but the language of Constantinople was spread beyond the Alps; and the natives of France, Germany, and England, imparted to their country the sacred fire which they had kindled in the schools of Florence and Rome."

* Our author recollected the following panegyric on Pope Nicholas, in the Dedication of Casaubon's edition of Polybius, to Henry IV. of France:

"*Quum enim a pluribus retro sæculis, in principum animis, toto Occidente, amor politioris literaturæ et Græci sermonis excoluisset; accidit non sine numine profecto, ut circa illa ipsa tempora Byzantinæ cladis, et paullo ante, summi in Europa viri et principes generossissimi hunc veternum seu virgula divina tacti, opportune excuterent, et ad bene merendum de studiis politioribus et de linguis, ardore incredibili accenderentur. Prima terrarum Italia ad hanc palmam occupandam, è diuturno torpore tunc demum expergefacta, sese concitavit, et nationibus aliis per Europam, exemplum quod imitarentur præbuit. In ipsa verò Italia, ad certamen adeo gloriosum, Nicolaus Quintus Pontifex Maximus, in cujus extrema tempora Byzantini imperii eversio incidit, princeps, quod equidem sciam, signum sustulit. Nam et literarum dicitur fuisse intelligentissimus; et,*

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sess; and, amongst the rest, some of these remaining fragments of Polybius. The body of this history, as he left it finished, was consisting of forty books, of which the eighth part* is only remaining to us entire. As for his negociations, when he was sent ambassador either from his own countrymen,† the commonwealth of the Achaians, or afterwards was employed by the Romans on their business with other nations, we are obliged to Constantine the Great for their preservation; for that emperor was so much in love with the dexterous management and wisdom of our author, that he caused them all to be faithfully transcribed, and made frequent use of them in his own despatches and affairs with foreign princes, as his best guides in his concernments with them.

Polybius, as you will find in reading of him, though he principally intended the history of the

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quod res arguit, earum amore erat flagrantissimus. Primus hic, ilta ætate, libros antiquorum scriptorum sedulo eonquirere curæ habuit; magnamque earum copiam in Vaticanam intulit; primus cum assiduis hortatibus, tum ingentibus etiam propositis præmiis, ad meliorem literaturam è tenebris oblivionis in lucem revocandam, homines Italos stimulavit: primus, Græcæ linguæ auctores omnis sincerioris doctrinæ esse promos condos qui non ignoraret, ut Latino sermone exprimerentur, vehementissime optavit, et efficere contendit."

* That is, the first five books.

† Polybius, the historian, was born at Megalopolis, in Arcadia, in the fourth year of the 143d Olympiad, about 205 years before the Christian æra. Being carried to Rome as an hostage, he became the companion and friend of the younger Scipio Africanus; accompanied him in his campaigns; and is said to have witnessed the destruction of Carthage, in the 158th Olympiad. Having returned to his native country, he died in the 164th Olympiad, 124 years before Christ, in consequence of a fall from his horse.

The history of Polybius embraced the space from the first year of the 140th to the first of the 153d Olympiad, being fifty-three years.

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Romans, and the establishment of their empire over the greatest part of the world which was then known, yet had in his eye the general history of the times in which he lived, not forgetting either the wars of his own country with their neighbours of Etolia, or the concurrent affairs of Macedonia and the provinces of Greece, which is properly so called; nor the monarchies of Asia and Egypt; nor the republic of the Carthaginians, with the several traverses of their fortunes, either in relation to the Romans, or independent to the wars which they waged with them; besides what happened in Spain and Sicily, and other European countries. The time, which is taken up in this history, consists of three-and-fifty years; and the greatest part of it is employed in the description of those events, of which the author was an eye-witness, or bore a considerable part in the conduct of them. But in what particular time or age it was, when mankind received that irrecoverable loss of this noble history, is not certainly delivered to us. It appears to have been perfect in the reign of Constantine, by what I have already noted; and neither Casaubon, nor any other, can give us any further account concerning it.

The first attempt towards a translation of him, was by command of the same Pope Nicholas the Fifth; already mentioned, who esteemed him the prince of Greek historians; would have him continually in his hands; and used to make this judgment of him,—that, if he yielded to one or two, in the praise of eloquence, yet, in wisdom, and all other accomplishments belonging to a perfect historian, he was at least equal to any other writer, Greek or Roman, and perhaps excelled them all. This is the author, who is now offered to us in our mother-tongue, recommended by the nobility of

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his birth, by his institution in arts and sciences, by his knowledge in natural and moral philosophy, and particularly the politics; by his being conversant both in the arts of peace and war; by his education under his father Lycortas, who voluntarily deposed himself from his sovereignty of Megalopolis to become a principal member of the Achaian commonwealth, which then flourished under the management of Aratus; by his friendship with Scipio Africanus, who subdued Carthage, to whom he was both a companion and a counsellor; and by the good-will, esteem. and intimacy, which he had with several princes of Asia, Greece, and Egypt, during his life; and after his decease, by deserving the applause and approbation of all succeeding ages.

This author, so long neglected in the barbarous times of Christianity, and so little known in Europe, (according to the fate which commonly follows the best of writers,) was pulled from under the rubbish which covered him, by the learned bishop, Nicholas the Fifth; and some parts of his history (for with all his diligence he was not able to recover the whole) were by him recommended to a person knowing both in the Greek and Roman tongues, and learned for the times in which he lived, to be translated into Latin; and, to the honour of our Polybius, he was amongst the first of the Greek writers, who deserved to have this care bestowed on him; which notwithstanding, so many hindrances occurred in this attempt, that the work was not perfected in his popedom, neither was any more than a third part of what is now recovered in his hands; neither did that learned Italian,* who

* Nicolo Paretti published a Latin version of the first five

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had undertaken him, succeed very happily in that endeavour; for the perfect knowledge of the Greek language was not yet restored, and that translator was but as a one-eyed man amongst the nation of the blind; only suffered till a better could be found to do right to an author, whose excellence required a more just interpreter than the ignorance of that age afforded. And this gives me occasion to admire, (says Casaubon,) that in following times, when eloquence was redeemed, and the knowledge of the Greek language flourished, yet no man thought of pursuing that design, which was so worthily begun in those first rudiments of learning. Some, indeed, of almost every nation in Europe, have been instrumental in the recovery of several lost parts of our Polybius, and commented on them with good success; but no man, before Casaubon, had reviewed the first translation, corrected its errors, and put the last hand to its accomplishment. The world is therefore beholden to him for this great work; for he has collected into one their scattered fragments, has pieced them together according to the natural order in which they were written, made them intelligible to scholars, and rendered the French translator's task more easy to his hands.

Our author is particularly mentioned with great honour by Cicero, Strabo, Josephus, and Plutarch; and in what rank of writers they are placed, none of the learned need to be informed. He is copied in whole books together, by Livy, commonly esteemed the prince of the Roman history, and

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books of Polybius, at Rome, in 1473, folio. The first Greek edition appeared in 1530; the second at Basle, in 1549. The last is most esteemed.

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translated word for word, though the Latin historian is not to be excused, for not mentioning the man to whom he had been so much obliged, nor for taking, as his own, the worthy labours of another. Marcus Brutus, who preferred the freedom of his country to the obligations which he had to Julius Cæsar, so prized Polybius, that he made a compendium of his works; and read him not only for his instruction, but for the diversion of his grief, when his noble enterprize for the restoration of the commonwealth had not found the success which it deserved. And this is not the least commendation of our author, that he who was not wholly satisfied with the eloquence of Tully, should epitomise Polybius with his own hand.* It was on the consideration of Brutus, and the veneration which he paid him, that Constantine the Great took so great a pleasure in reading our author, and collecting the several treaties of his embassies; of which, though many are now lost, yet those which remain are a sufficient testimony of his abilities; and I congratulate my country, that a prince of our extraction (as was Constantine,) has the honour of obliging the Christian world by these remainders of our great historian.

It is now time to enter into the particular praises of Polybius, which I have given you before in gross;

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* "Plutarch tells us, that Brutus was thus employed the day before the battle of Pharsalia. 'It was the middle of summer; the heats were intense, the marshy situation of the camp disagreeable, and his tent-bearers were long in coming. Nevertheless, though extremely harassed and fatigued, he did not anoint himself till noon; and then taking a morsel of bread, while others were at rest, or musing on the event of the ensuing day, he employed himself till the evening in writing an epitome of Polybius."—MALONE.

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and the first of them (following the method of Casaubon,) is his wonderful skill in political affairs. I had read him, in English, with the pleasure of a boy, before I was ten years of age; and yet, even then, had some dark notions of the prudence with which he conducted his design, particularly in making me know, and almost see, the places where such and such actions were performed. This was the first distinction which I was then capable of making betwixt him and other historians which I read early. But when being of a riper age, I took him again into my hands, I must needs say that I have profited more by reading him than by Thucydides, Appian, Dion Cassius, and all the rest of the Greek historians together; and amongst all the Romans, none have reached him in this particular, but Tacitus, who is equal with him.

It is wonderful to consider with how much care and application he instructs, counsels, warns, admonishes, and advises, whensoever he can find a fit occasion. He performs all these sometimes in the nature of a common parent of mankind; and sometimes also limits his instructions to particular nations, by a friendly reproach of those failings and errors to which they were most obnoxious. In this last manner, he gives instructions to the Mantinæans, the Elæans, and several other provinces of Greece, by informing them of such things as were conducing to their welfare. Thus he likewise warns the Romans of their obstinacy and wilfulness, vices which have often brought them to the brink of ruin. And thus he frequently exhorts the Greeks, in general, not to depart from their dependence on the Romans; nor to take false measures, by embroiling themselves in wars with that victorious people, in whose fate it was to be masters of the universe. But as his peculiar concern-

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ment was for the safety of his own countrymen, the Achaians, he more than once insinuates to them the care of their preservation, which consisted in submitting to the yoke of the Roman people, which they could not possibly avoid; and to make it easy to them, by a cheerful compliance with their commands, rather than unprofitably to oppose them with the hazard of those remaining privileges which the clemency of the conquerors had left them. For this reason, in the whole course of his history he makes it his chiefest business to persuade the Grecians in general, that the growing greatness and fortune of the Roman empire was not owing to mere chance, but to the conduct and invincible courage of that people, to whom their own virtue gave the dominion of the world. And yet this counsellor of patience and submission, as long as there was any probability of hope remaining to withstand the progress of the Roman fortune, was not wanting to the utmost of his power to resist them, at least to defer the bondage of his country, which he had long foreseen. But the fates inevitably drawing all things into subjection to Rome, this well-deserving citizen was commanded to appear in that city,* where he suffered the imprisonment of many years; yet even then his virtue was beneficial to him, the knowledge of his learning and his wisdom procuring him the friendship of the most potent in the senate; so that it may be said with Casaubon, that the same virtue which had brought him into distress, was the very means of his relief, and of his exaltation to greater dignities than those which he lost; for by the in-

* With a thousand of his countrymen, whom the Romans ordered hither as hostages, after the conquest of Macedonia.

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tercession of Cato the Censor, Scipio Æmilianus, who afterwards destroyed Carthage, and some other principal noblemen, our Polybius was restored to liberty. After which, having set it down as a maxim, that the welfare of the Achaians consisted, as I have said, in breaking their own stubborn inclinations, and yielding up that freedom which they no longer could maintain, he made it the utmost aim of his endeavours to bring over his countrymen to that persuasion; in which, though, to their misfortunes, his counsels were not prevalent, yet thereby he not only proved himself a good patriot, but also made his fortunes with the Romans. For his countrymen, by their own unpardonable fault, not long afterwards drew on themselves their own destruction; for when Mummius, in the Achaian war, made a final conquest of that country, he dissolved the great council of their commonwealth.* But, in the mean time, Polybius enjoyed that tranquillity of fortune which he had purchased by his wisdom, in that private state, being particularly dear to Scipio and Lælius, and some of the rest, who were then in the administration of the Roman government. And that favour which he had gained amongst them, he employed not in heaping riches to himself, but as a means of performing many considerable actions; as particularly when Scipio was sent to demolish Carthage,† he went along with him in the nature of a counsellor and companion of his enterprize. At which time, receiving the command of a fleet from him, he made discoveries in many parts of the Atlantic Ocean, and especially on the shores of Africa; and‡ doing

* A. U. C. 608.
† A. U. C. 607.
‡ The word *and* renders this passage ungrammatical.—Malone.

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many good offices to all sorts of people whom he had power to oblige, especially to the Grecians, who, in honour of their benefactor, caused many statues of him to be erected, as Pausanias has written. The particular gratitude of the Locrians in Italy is also an undeniable witness of this truth; who, by his mediation, being discharged from the burden of taxes which oppressed them, through the hardship of those conditions which the Romans had imposed on them in the treaty of peace, professed themselves to be owing for their lives and fortunes, to the interest only and good nature of Polybius, which they took care to express by all manner of acknowledgment.

Yet as beneficent as he was, the greatest obligement which he could lay on human kind, was the writing of this present history; wherein he has left a perpetual monument of his public love to all the world in every succeeding age of it, by giving us such precepts as are most conducing to our common safety and our benefit. This philanthropy (which we have not a proper word in English to express,) is every where manifest in our author; and from hence proceeded that divine rule which he gave to Scipio,—that whensoever he went abroad, he should take care not to return to his own house, before he had acquired a friend by some new obligement. To this excellency of nature we owe the treasure which is contained in this most useful work: this is the standard by which all good and prudent princes ought to regulate their actions. None have more need of friends than monarchs; and though ingratitude is too frequent in the most of those who are obliged, yet encouragement will work on generous minds; and if the experiment be lost on thousands, yet it never fails on all: and one virtuous man in a whole nation is worth the buying, as one

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diamond is worth the search in a heap of rubbish. But a narrow-hearted prince, who thinks that mankind is made for him alone, puts his subjects in a way of deserting him on the first occasion;* and teaches them to be as sparing of their duty, as he is of his bounty. He is sure of making enemies, who will not be at the cost of rewarding his friends and servants; and, by letting his people see he loves them not, instructs them to live upon the square with him, and to make him sensible in his turn, that prerogatives are given, but privileges are inherent. As for tricking, cunning, and that which in sovereigns they call king-craft, and reason of state in commonwealths, to them and their proceedings Polybius is an open enemy. He severely reproves all faithless practices, and that κακοπραγμόσυνη, or vicious policy, which is too frequent in the management of the public. He commends nothing but plainness, sincerity, and the common good, undisguised, and set in a true light before the people. Not but that there may be a necessity of saving a nation, by going beyond the letter of the law, or even sometimes by superseding it; but then that necessity must not be artificial,—it must be visible, it must be strong enough to make the remedy not only pardoned, but desired, to the major part of the people; not for the interest only of some few men, but for the public safety; for otherwise, one infringement of a law draws after it the practice of subverting all the liberties of a nation, which are only entrusted with any government, but can never be given up to it. The best way to distinguish be-

* Mr Malone justly conjectures, that Dryden here thought of his old master James II., whose economy bordered on penury, and whose claims of prerogative approached to tyranny.

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twixt a pretended necessity and a true, is to observe if the remedy be rarely applied, or frequently; in times of peace, or times of war and public distractions, which are the most usual causes of sudden necessities. From hence Casaubon infers, that this our author, who preaches virtue, and probity, and plain-dealing, ought to be studied principally by kings and ministers of state; and that youth, which are bred up to succeed in the management of business, should read him carefully, and imbibe him thoroughly, detesting the maxims that are given by Machiavel and others, which are only the instruments of tyranny. Furthermore, (continues he,) the study of truth is perpetually joined with the love of virtue; for there is no virtue which derives not its original from truth; as, on the contrary, there is no vice which has not its beginning from a lie. Truth is the foundation of all knowledge, and the cement of all societies; and this is one of the most shining qualities in our author.

I was so strongly persuaded of this myself, in the perusal of the present history, that I confess, amongst all the ancients I never found any who had the air of it so much; and amongst the moderns, none but Philip de Commines.* They had this common to them, that they both changed their masters. But Polybius changed not his side, as Philip did: he

* Philip de Commines, author of the excellent Memoirs of his own time. He was born in Flanders, and was for several years a distinguished ornament of the court of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, his native sovereign; but was tempted to desert his service for that of Louis XI., by whom he was employed in several negociations. After the death of that monarch, Commines fell into disgrace with his successor, and was long detained in prison: he died in 1509. It was of this historian Catherine de Medicis was wont to say, "that he made as many heretics in the state, as Luther in the church."

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was not bought off to another party, but pursued the true interest of his country, even when he served the Romans. Yet since truth, as one of the philosophers has told me, lies in the bottom of a well, so it is hard to draw it up: much pains, much diligence, much judgment is necessary to hand it us; even cost is oftentimes required; and Polybius was wanting in none of these.

We find but few historians of all ages, who have been diligent enough in their search for truth: it is their common method to take on trust what they distribute to the public; by which means a falsehood once received from a famed writer becomes traditional to posterity. But Polybius weighed the authors from whom he was forced to borrow the history of the times immediately preceding his, and oftentimes corrected them, either by comparing them each with other, or by the lights which he had received from ancient men of known integrity amongst the Romans, who had been conversant in those affairs which were then managed, and were yet living to instruct him. He also learned the Roman tongue; and attained to that knowledge of their laws, their rights, their customs, and antiquities, that few of their own citizens understood them better: having gained permission from the senate to search the Capitol, he made himself familiar with their records, and afterwards translated them into his mother-tongue. So that he taught the noblemen of Rome their own municipal laws, and was accounted more skilful in them than Fabius Pictor, a man of the senatorian order, who wrote the transactions of the Punic wars. He who neglected none of the laws of history, was so careful of truth, (which is the principal,) that he made it his whole business to deliver nothing to posterity which might deceive them; and by that diligence

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and exactness, may easily be known to be studious of truth, and a lover of it. What therefore Brutus thought worthy to transcribe with his own hand out of him, I need not be ashamed to copy after him:—"I believe," says Polybius, "that Nature herself has constituted truth as the supreme deity, which is to be adored by mankind, and that she has given it greater force than any of the rest; for being opposed, as she is on all sides, and appearances of truth so often passing for the thing itself, in behalf of plausible falsehoods, yet by her wonderful operation she insinuates herself into the minds of men; sometimes exerting her strength immediately, and sometimes lying hid in darkness for length of time; but at last she struggles through it, and appears triumphant over falsehood." This sincerity Polybius preferred to all his friends, and even to his father: "in all other offices of life," says he, "praise a lover of his friends, and of his native country; but in writing history, I am obliged to divest myself of all other obligations, and sacrifice them all to truth."

Aratus, the Sicyonian, in the childhood of our author, was the chief of the Achaian commonwealth; a man in principal esteem, both in his own country and all the provinces of Greece; admired universally for his probity, his wisdom, his just administration, and his conduct: in remembrance of all which, his grateful countrymen, after his decease, ordained him those honours which are only due to heroes. Him our Polybius had in veneration, and formed himself by imitation of his virtues; and is never wanting in his commendations through the course of his history. Yet even this man, when the cause of truth required it, is many times reproved by him for his slownesss in counsel, his tardiness in the beginning of his enterprizes, his tedious

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and more than Spanish deliberations; and his heavy and cowardly proceedings are as freely blamed by our Polybius, as they were afterwards by Plutarch, who questionless drew his character from this history. In plain terms, that wise general scarce ever performed any great action but by night; the glittering of a sword before his face was offensive to his eyes; our author therefore boldly accuses him of his faint-heartedness; attributes the defeat at Caphiæ wholly to him; and is not sparing to affirm, that all Peloponnesus was filled with trophies, which were set up as the monuments of his losses. He sometimes praises, and at other times condemns the proceedings of Philip, King of Macedon, the son of Demetrius, according to the occasions which he gave him by the variety and inequality of his conduct; and this most exquisite on either side. He more than once arraigns him for the inconstancy of his judgment, and chaptors even his own Aratus on the same head; shewing, by many examples, produced from their actions, how many miseries they had both occasioned to the Grecians; and attributing it to the weakness of human nature, which can make nothing perfect. But some men are brave in battle, who are weak in counsel, which daily experience sets before our eyes; others deliberate wisely, but are weak in the performing part; and even no man is the same to-day, which he was yesterday, or may be to-morrow. On this account, says our author, "a good man is sometimes liable to blame, and a bad man, though not often, may possibly deserve to be commended." And for this very reason he severely taxes Timæus, a malicious historian, who will allow no kind of virtue to Agathocles, the tyrant of Sicily, but detracts from all his actions, even the most glorious, because in general he was a vicious man. "Is it to be thought," says

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Casaubon, "that Polybius loved the memory of Agathocles, the tyrant, or hated that of the virtuous Aratus?" But it is one thing to commend a tyrant, and another thing to overpass in silence those laudable actions which are performed by him; because it argues an author of the same falsehood, to pretermit what has actually been done, as to feign those actions which have never been.

It will not be unprofitable, in this place, to give another famous instance of the candour and integrity of our historian. There had been an ancient league betwixt the republic of Achaia and the kings of Egypt, which was entertained by both parties sometimes on the same conditions, and sometimes also the confederacy was renewed on other terms. It happened, in the 148th Olympiad,* that Ptolomy Epiphanes, on this occasion, sent one Demetrius, his ambassador to the commonwealth of Achaia. That republic was then ruinously divided into two factions; whereof the heads on one side were Philopœmen, and Lycortas, the father of our author; of the adverse party, the chief was Aristænus, with some other principal Achaians. The faction of Philopœmen was prevalent in the council, for renewing the confederacy with the King of Egypt; in order to which, Lycortas received a commission to go to that court, and treat the articles of alliance. Accordingly, he goes, and afterwards returns, and gives account to his superiors, that the treaty was concluded. Aristænus, hearing nothing but a bare relation of a league that was made, without any thing belonging to the conditions of it, and well knowing that several forms of those alliances had been used in the former negociations, asked Lycor-

* In the year of Rome, 568.

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tas, in the council, according to which of them this present confederacy was made? To this question of his enemy, Lycortas had not a word to answer; for it had so happened by the wonderful neglect of Philopœmen and his own, and also that of Ptolomy's counsellors, (or, as I rather believe, by their craft contrived,) that the whole transaction had been loosely and confusedly managed, which, in a matter of so great importance, redounded to the scandal and ignominy of Philopœmen and Lycortas, in the face of that grave assembly. Now these proceedings our author so relates, as if he had been speaking of persons to whom he had no manner of relation, though one of them was his own father, and the other always esteemed by him in the place of a better father. But being mindful of the law which himself had instituted, concerning the indispensable duty of an historian, (which is truth,) he chose rather to be thought a lover of it, than of either of his parents. It is true, Lycortas, in all probability, was dead when Polybius wrote this history; but, had he been then living, we may safely think, that his son would have assumed the same liberty, and not feared to have offended him in behalf of truth.

Another part of this veracity is also deserving the notice of the reader, though at the same time we must conclude, that it was also an effect of a sound judgment, that he perpetually explodes the legends of prodigies and miracles, and, instead of them, most accurately searches into the natural causes of those actions which he describes; for, from the first of these, the latter follows of direct consequence. And for this reason he professes an immortal enmity to those tricks and jugglings, which the common people believe as real miracles; because they are ignorant of the causes which produced them.

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But he had made a diligent search into them, and found out, that they proceeded either from the fond credulity of the people, or were imposed on them by the craft of those whose interest it was that they should be believed. You hear not in Polybius, that it rained blood or stones; that a bull had spoken; or a thousand such impossibilities, with which Livy perpetually crowds the calends of almost every consulship.* His new years could no more begin without them, during his description of the Punic wars, than our prognosticating almanacks without the effects of the present oppositions betwixt Saturn and Jupiter, the foretelling of comets and coruscations in the air, which seldom happen at the times assigned by our astrologers, and almost always fail in their events. If you will give credit to some other authors, some god was always present with Hannibal or Scipio, to direct their actions; that a visible deity wrought journey-work under Hannibal, to conduct him through the difficult passages of the Alps; and another did the same office of drudgery for Scipio when he besieged New Carthage, by draining the water, which otherwise would have drowned his army in their rash approaches; which Polybius observing, says wittily and truly, that the authors of such fabulous kind of stuff write tragedies not histories; for, as the poets, when they are at a loss for the solution of a plot, bungle up their catastrophe with a god descending in a machine, so these inconsiderate historians, when they have brought their heroes into a plunge by some

* I believe the most enthusiastic admirers of Livy must tire of these unvaried prodigies. *Et bos locutus* occurs as often, and is mentioned with as much indifference, as a nomination of sheriffs in Hall, Stowe, or Speed.

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rash and headlong undertaking, having no human way remaining to disengage them with their honour, are forced to have recourse to miracle, and introduce a god for their deliverance. It is a common frenzy of the ignorant multitude, says Casaubon, to be always engaging heaven on their side; and indeed it is a successful stratagem of any general to gain authority among his soldiers, if he can persuade them, that he is the man by fate appointed for such or such an action, though most impracticable. To be favoured of God, and command (if it may be permitted so to say,) the extraordinary concourse of Providence, sets off a hero, and makes more specious the cause for which he fights, without any consideration of morality, which ought to be the beginning and end of all our actions; for, where that is violated, God is only present in permission; and suffers a wrong to be done, but not commands it. Light historians, and such as are superstitious in their natures, by the artifice of feigned miracles captivate the gross understandings of their readers, and please their fancies by relations of things which are rather wonderful than true; but such as are of a more profound and solid judgment, (which is the character of our Polybius,) have recourse only to their own natural lights, and by them pursue the methods at least of probability, if they cannot arrive to a settled certainty. He was satisfied that Hannibal was not the first who had made a passage through the Alps, but that the Gauls had been before him in their descent on Italy; and also knew, that this most prudent general, when he laid his design of invading that country, had made an alliance with the Gauls, and prepossessed them in his favour; and before he stirred a foot from Spain, had provided against all those difficulties which he foresaw in his attempt, and compassed his under-

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taking, which indeed was void of miracles, but full of conduct, and military experience. In the same manner, Scipio, before he departed from Rome, to take his voyage into Spain, had carefully considered every particular circumstance which might cross his purpose, and made his enterprize as easy to him as human prudence could provide; so that he was victorious over that nation, not by virtue of any miracle, but by his admirable forecast, and wise conduct in the execution of his design. Of which, though Polybius was not an eye-witness, he yet had it from the best testimony, which was that of Lælius, the friend of Scipio, who accompanied him in that expedition; of whom our author, with great diligence, inquired concerning every thing of moment which happened in that war, and whom he commends for his sincerity in that relation.

Whensoever he gives us the account of any considerable action, he never fails to tell us why it succeeded, or for what reason it miscarried; together with all the antecedent causes of its undertaking, and the manner of its performance; all which he accurately explains: of which I will select but some few instances, because I want leisure to expatiate on many. In the fragments of the seventeenth book he makes a learned dissertation concerning the Macedonian phalanx, or gross body of foot, which was formerly believed to be invincible, till experience taught the contrary by the success of the battle which Philip lost to the commonwealth of Rome; and the manifest and most certain causes are therein related, which prove it to be inferior to the Roman legions. When also he had told us in his former books, of the three great battles wherein Hannibal had overthrown the Romans, and the last at Cannæ, wherein he had in a manner conquered that republic, he gives the reasons of every defeat,

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either from the choice of ground, or the strength of the foreign horse in Hannibal's army, or the ill-timing of the fight on the vanquished side. After this, when he describes the turn of fortune on the part of the Romans, you are visibly conducted upwards to the causes of that change, and the reasonableness of the method which was afterwards pursued by that commonwealth, which raised it to the empire of the world. In these and many other examples, which for brevity are omitted, there is nothing more plain than that Polybius denies all power to fortune, and places the sum of success in Providence; συμβαίνειν τύχην αἰτιᾶσθαι φαῦλον, indeed, are his words. It is a madness to make fortune the mistress of events; because in herself she is nothing, can rule nothing, but is ruled by prudence. So that whenever our author seems to attribute any thing to chance, he speaks only with the vulgar, and desires so to be understood.

But here I must make bold to part company with Casaubon for a moment. He is a vehement friend to any author with whom he has taken any pains; and his partiality to Persius, in opposition to Juvenal, is too fresh in my memory to be forgotten.* Because Polybius will allow nothing to the power of chance, he takes an occasion to infer, that he believed a providence; sharply inveighing against those who have accused him of atheism. He makes Suidas his second in this quarrel; and produces his single evidence, and that but a bare assertion, without proof, that Polybius believed, with us Christians, God administered all human actions and affairs. But our author will not be defended in

* See Vol. XIII. p. 68, where our author, in his "Essay on Satire," controverts keenly the position of Casaubon.

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this case; his whole history reclaims to that opinion. When he speaks of Providence, or of any divine admonition, he is as much in jest, as when he speaks of fortune; it is all to the capacity of the vulgar. Prudence was the only divinity which he worshipped, and the possession of virtue the only end which he proposed. If I would have disguised this to the reader, it was not in my power. The passages which manifestly prove his irreligion are so obvious, that I need not quote them. Neither do I know any reason why Casaubon should enlarge so much in his justification; since to believe false gods, and to believe none, are errors of the same importance. He who knew not our God, saw through the ridiculous opinions of the heathens concerning theirs; and not being able without revelation to go farther, stopped at home in his own breast, and made prudence his goddess, truth his search, and virtue his reward. If Casaubon, like him, had followed truth, he would have saved me the ungrateful pains of contradicting him; but even the reputation of Polybius, if there were occasion, is to be sacrificed to truth, according to his own maxim.

As for the wisdom of our author, whereby he wonderfully foresaw the decay of the Roman empire, and those civil wars which turned it down from a commonwealth to an absolute monarchy, he who will take the pains to review this history will easily perceive, that Polybius was of the best sort of prophets, who predict from natural causes those events which must naturally proceed from them. And these things were not to succeed even in the compass of the next century to that wherein he lived, but the person was then living who was the first mover towards them; and that was that great Scipio Africanus, who, by cajoling the people to

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break the fundamental constitutions of the government in his favour, by bringing him too early to the consulship,* and afterwards by making their discipline of war precarious, first taught them to devolve the power and authority of the senate into the hands of one, and then to make that one to be at the disposition of the soldiery; which though he practised at a time when it was necessary for the safety of the commonwealth, yet it drew after it those fatal consequences, which not only ruined the republic, but also, in process of time, the monarchy itself. But the author was too much in the interests of that family, to name Scipio; and therefore he gives other reasons, to which I refer the reader, that I may avoid prolixity.

By what degrees Polybius arrived to this height of knowledge, and consummate judgment in affairs, it will not be hard to make the reader comprehend; for, presupposing in him all that birth or nature could give a man, who was formed for the management of great affairs, and capable of recording them, he was likewise entered from his youth into those employments which add experience to natural endowments; being joined in commission with his father Lycortas, and the younger Aratus, before the age of twenty, in an embassy to Egypt: after which he was perpetually in the business of his own commonwealth, or that of Rome. So that it seems to be one part of the Roman felicity, that he was born in an age when their commonwealth was growing to the height; that he might be the historian of those great actions, which were performed not only in his lifetime, but the chief of them even in his sight.

I must confess, that the preparations to his his-

* In his thirty-eighth year, forty-three being the legal age.

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tory, or the Prolegomena, as they are called, are very large, and the digressions in it are exceeding frequent. But as to his preparatives, they were but necessary to make the reader comprehend the drift and design of his undertaking: and the digressions are also so instructive, that we may truly say, they transcend the profit which we receive from the matter of fact. Upon the whole, we may conclude him to be a great talker; but we must grant him to be a prudent man. We can spare nothing of all he says, it is so much to our improvement; and if the rest of his history had remained to us, in all probability it would have been more close: for we can scarce conceive what was left in nature for him to add, he has so emptied almost all the common-places of digressions already; or if he could have added any thing, those observations might have been as useful and as necessary as the rest which he has given us, and that are descended to our hands.

I will say nothing farther of the "Excerpta," which (as Casaubon thinks,) are part of that epitome which was begun to be made by Marcus Brutus, but never finished; nor of those embassies which are collected and compiled by the command of Constantine the Great; because neither of them are translated in this work. And whether or no they will be added in another impression, I am not certain; the translator of these five books having carried his work no farther than it was perfect. He, I suppose, will acquaint you with his own purpose, in the preface which I hear he intends to prefix before Polybius.

Let us now hear Polybius himself describing an accomplished historian, wherein we shall see his own picture, as in a glass, reflected to him, and

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given us afterwards to behold in the writing of this history.

Plato said of old, that it would be happy for mankind, if either philosophers administered the government, or that governors applied themselves to the study of philosophy. I may also say, that it would be happy for history, if those who undertake to write it, were men conversant in political affairs, who applied themselves seriously to their undertaking, not negligently, but as such who were fully persuaded that they undertook a work of the greatest moment, of the greatest excellency, and the most necessary for mankind; establishing this as the foundation whereon they are to build, that they can never be capable of performing their duty as they ought, unless they have formed themselves beforehand to their undertaking, by prudence, and long experience of affairs; without which endowments and advantages, if they attempt to write a history, they will fall into a various and endless labyrinth of errors.

When we hear this author speaking, we are ready to think ourselves engaged in a conversation with Cato the Censor, with Lælius, with Massinissa, and with the two Scipios; that is, with the greatest heroes and most prudent men of the greatest age in the Roman commonwealth. This sets me so on fire, when I am reading either here, or in any ancient author, their lives and actions, that I cannot hold from breaking out with Montagne into this expression: "It is just," says he, "for every honest man to be content with the government and laws of his native country, without endeavouring to alter or subvert them; but if I were to choose, where I would have been born, it should have been in a commonwealth." He indeed names Venice, which, for many reasons, should not be my wish;

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but rather Rome in such an age, if it were possible, as that wherein Polybius lived; or that of Sparta, whose constitution for a republic is by our author compared with Rome, to which he justly gives the preference.

I will not undertake to compare Polybius and Tacitus; though, if I should attempt it upon the whole merits of the cause, I must allow to Polybius the greater comprehension, and the larger soul; to Tacitus, the greater eloquence, and the more close connexion of his thoughts. The manner of Tacitus in writing is more like the force and gravity of Demosthenes; that of Polybius more like the copiousness and diffusive character of Cicero. Amongst historians, Tacitus imitated Thucydides, and Polybius, Herodotus. Polybius foresaw the ruin of the Roman commonwealth, by luxury, lust, and cruelty; Tacitus foresaw in the causes those events which would destroy the monarchy. They are both of them, without dispute, the best historians in their several kinds. In this they are alike, that both of them suffered under the iniquity of the times in which they lived; both their histories are dismembered, the greater part of them lost, and they are interpolated in many places. Had their works been perfect, we might have had longer histories, but not better. Casaubon, according to his usual partiality, condemns Tacitus that he may raise Polybius; who needs not any sinister artifice to make him appear equal to the best. Tacitus described the times of tyranny; but he always writes with some kind of indignation against them. It is not his fault that Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, were bad princes. He is accused of malevolence, and of taking actions in the worst sense; but we are still to remember, that those were the actions of tyrants. Had the rest of his history

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remained to us, we had certainly found a better account of Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, and Trajan, who were virtuous emperors; and he would have given the principles of their actions a contrary turn. But it is not my business to defend Tacitus; neither dare I decide the preference betwixt him and our Polybius. They are equally profitable and instructive to the reader; but Tacitus more useful to those who are born under a monarchy, Polybius to those who live in a republic.

What may farther be added concerning the history of this author, I leave to be performed by the elegant translator of his work.*

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* The elegant translator, however, gives us no information on that subject; his preface being principally a panegyric upon good discipline, which, without much risk of contradiction, he affirms to be the "substance and sum total of military science."

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THE

LIFE OF LUCIAN.

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THE

LIFE OF LUCIAN.

THE Dialogues of Lucian were translated by Walter Moyle, Sir Henry Shere, Charles Blount, and others, and seem to have been intended for publication about 1696, when our author supplied the following prefatory life. The design was, however, for a time laid aside, and the work did not appear until 1711, several years after Dryden's death. Hence the preface wants those last corrections, which, I suspect, Dryden contented himself with bestowing upon the proof-sheets, as they came from press. I have followed several of Mr Malone's judicious, and indeed indispensible, corrections of the printed copy.

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THE

LIFE OF LUCIAN.

THE writing a life is at all times, and in all circumstances, the most difficult task of an historian; and, notwithstanding the numerous tribe of biographers, we can scarce find one, except Plutarch, who deserves our perusal, or can invite a second view. But if the difficulty be so great where the materials are plentiful, and the incidents extraordinary, what must it be when the person, that affords the subject, denies matter enough for a page? The learned seldom abound with action, and it is action only that furnishes the historian with things agreeable and instructive. It is true, that Diogenes Laertius, and our learned countryman, Mr Stanley,* have both written the "Lives of the Philosophers;" but we are more obliged to the various principles of

* Thomas Stanley's "History of Philosophy," &c. was published in folio, in detached parts, between 1655 and 1660; and reprinted entire in 1687.

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their several sects, than to any thing remarkable that they did, for our entertainment.

But Lucian, as pleasing and useful as he was in his writings, in the opinion of the most candid judges, has left so little of his own affairs on record, that there is scarce sufficient to fill a page, from his birth to his death.

There were many of the name of Lucian among the ancients, eminent in several ways, and whose names have reached posterity with honour and applause. Suidas mentions one, as a man of singular probity, who, having discharged the administration of the chief prefect of the Oriental empire,* under Arcadius, with extraordinary justice and praise of the people, drew on himself the envy and hate of the courtiers, (the constant attendant of eminent virtue and merit,) and the anger of the emperor himself; and was at last murdered by Rufinus.†

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* A. D. 375. Rufinus was chief prefect of the East. The person here alluded to was only count of fifteen provinces. Dryden, writing from memory, confounded the offices of the murderer and murdered. See the next note.

† Gibbon thus narrates the catastrophe:—"The extreme parsimony of Rufinus left him only the reproach and envy of ill-gotten wealth. His dependents served him without attachment; the universal hatred of mankind was repressed only by the influence of servile fear. The fate of Lucian proclaimed to the East, that the prefect, whose industry was much abated in the dispatch of ordinary business, was active and indefatigable in the pursuit of revenge. Lucian, (the son of the prefect Florentius, the oppressor of Gaul, and the enemy of Julian,) had employed a considerable part of his inheritance, the fruit of rapine and corruption, to purchase the friendship of Rufinus, and the high office of Count of the East. But the new magistrate imprudently departed from the maxims of the court and of the times; disgraced his benefactor, by the contrast of a virtuous and temperate administration; and presumed to refuse an act of injustice, which might have tended to the profit of the emperor's uncle. Arcadius was easily persuaded to resent the supposed insult; and the prefect of the East

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Among those, who were eminent for their learning, were some divines and philosophers. Of the former, we find one in St Cyprian, to whom the fourth and seventeenth epistles are inscribed. There was another, priest of the church of Antioch, who, as Suidas assures us, reviewed, corrected, and restored to its primitive purity, the Hebrew Bible; and afterward suffered martyrdom, at Nicomedia, under Maximinian.* A third was a priest of Jerusalem, who not only made a figure among the learn-

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resolved to execute in person the cruel vengeance which he meditated against this ungrateful delegate of his power. He performed, with incessant speed, the journey of seven or eight hundred miles, from Constantinople to Antioch, entered the capital of Syria at the dead of night, and spread universal consternation among a people ignorant of his design, but not ignorant of his character. The count of the fifteen provinces of the East was dragged, like the vilest malefactor, before the arbitrary tribunal of Rufinus. Notwithstanding the clearest evidence of his integrity, which was not impeached even by the voice of an accuser, Lucian was condemned, almost without a trial, to suffer a cruel and ignominious punishment. The ministers of the tyrant, by the order, and in the presence, of their master, beat him on the neck with leather thongs, armed at the extremities with lead; and when he fainted under the violence of the pain, he was removed in a close litter to conceal his dying agonies from the eyes of the indignant city. No sooner had Rufinus perpetrated this inhuman act, the sole object of his expedition, than he returned amidst the deep and silent curses of a trembling people, from Antioch to Constantinople; and his diligence was accelerated by the hope of accomplishing, without delay, the nuptials of his daughter with the emperor of the East."—GIBBON's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iii. p. 209.

The punctuation throughout this piece is so inaccurate, and the paragraphs so strangely divided, that it must have been printed from a copy very carelessly written. In the present passage, we find *Rafiany*, instead of *Rufinus*. MALONE.

* A. D. 312. He suffered for favouring the Arians. MALONE.

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ed of his own age,* but, as Gesnerus observes, conveyed his reputation to posterity by the remains of his writings.

But none of this name has met with the general applause of so many ages, as Lucian the philosopher and eminent sophist, who was author of the following Dialogues, of whose birth, life, and death, I shall give you all I could collect of any certain and historical credit.

He had not the good fortune to be born of illustrious or wealthy parents, which give a man a very advantageous rise on his first appearance in the world; but the father of our Lucian laboured under so great a straitness of estate, that he was fain to put his son apprentice to a statuary, whose genius for the finer studies was so extraordinary and so rare; because he hoped from that business, not only a speedy supply to his own wants, but was secure that his education in that art would be much less expensive to him.

He was born in Samosata, a city of Syria, not far from the river Euphrates; and for this reason, he calls himself more than once an Assyrian, and a Syrian; but he was derived from a Greek original, his forefathers having been citizens of Patras in Achaia.

We have nothing certain as to the exact time of his birth. Suidas confirms his flourishing under the Emperor Trajan; but then he was likewise before

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* A. D. 415. He was minister of Caphargamala, and pretended to have been instructed by a dream of the burial-place of the proto-martyr Stephen, Gamaliel, and other saints. See GIBBON'S *History*, vol. iii. p. 97.

Several other persons of this name, besides those here mentioned, are enumerated by Fabricius. *Bibl. Græc.* iv. 508.

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him. Some mention the reign of Adrian; but it cannot be fixed to any year or consulate.*

The person he was bound to was his uncle, a man of a severe and morose temper, of whom he was to learn the statuary's and stone-cutter's art; for his father observing our Lucian, now a boy, of his own head, and without any instructor, make various figures in wax, he persuaded himself, that if he had a good master, he could not but arrive to an uncommon excellence in it.

But it happened, in the very beginning of his time, he broke a model, and was very severely called to account for it by his master. He, not liking this treatment, and having a soul and genius above any mechanic trade, ran away home.

After which, in his sleep, there appeared to him two young women, or rather the tutelar goddesses of the statuary art, and of the liberal sciences, hotly disputing of their preference to each other; and on a full hearing of both sides, he bids adieu to statuary, and entirely surrenders himself to the conduct of virtue and learning. And as his desires of improvement were great, and the instructions he had very good, the progress he made was as considerable, till, by the maturity of his age and his study, he made his appearance in the world.

Though it is not to be supposed, that there is any thing of reality in this dream, or vision, of Lucian, which he treats of in his works, yet this may be gathered from it,—that Lucian himself, having consulted his genius, and the nature of the study his father had allotted him, and that to which he found a propensity in himself, he quitted the former, and

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* Dr Franklin seems disposed to fix on the year 90.

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pursued the latter, choosing rather to form the minds of men than their statues.

In his youth, he taught rhetoric in Gaul, and in several other places. He pleaded likewise at the bar in Antioch, the capital of Syria; but the noise of the bar disgusting, and his ill success in causes disheartening him, he quitted the practice of rhetoric and the law, and applied himself to writing.

He was forty years old, when he first took to philosophy. Having a mind to make himself known in Macedon, he took the opportunity of speaking in the public assembly of all that region. In his old age, he was received into the imperial family, and had the place of intendant of Egypt,* after he had travelled through almost all the known countries of that age to improve his knowledge in men, manners, and arts; for some writers make this particular observation on his travel into Gaul, and residence in that country, that he gained there the greatest part of his knowledge in rhetoric, that region being in his age, and also before it, a nursery of eloquence and oratory, as Juvenal, Martial, and others, sufficiently witness.†

The manner of his death is obscure to us, though it is most probable he died of the gout. Suidas alone tells a story of his being worried to death, and devoured by dogs, returning from a feast; which being so uncommon a death, so very improbable, and attested only by one author, has found little credit with posterity. If it be true, that he was once a Christian, and afterwards became a renegade to our belief, perhaps some zealots may have in-

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* *Procurator principis.* Under Marcus Aurelius.

† See *Juv.* Sat. i. 44.; vii. 148.; xv. 111. *Quintil.* lib. x. cap. 3.

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vented this tale of his death, as a just and signal punishment for his apostacy. All men are willing to have the miracle, or at least the wonderful providence, go on their side, and will be teaching God Almighty what he ought to do in this world, as well as in the next; as if they were proper judges of his decrees, and for what end he prospers some, or punishes others, in this life. Ablancourt, and our learned countryman Dr Mayne,* look on the story as a fiction: and, for my part, I can see no reason either to believe he ever professed Christianity, or, if he did, why he might† not more probably die in his bed at so great an age as fourscore and ten, than be torn in pieces and devoured by dogs, when he was too feeble to defend himself. So early began the want of charity, the presumption of meddling with God's government, and the spirit of calumny amongst the primitive believers.

Of his posterity we know nothing more, than that he left a son behind him, who was as much in favour with the Emperor Julian, as his father had been with Aurelius the philosopher. This son became in time a famous sophist; and among the works of Julian we find an epistle of that great person to him.‡

I find that I have mingled, before I was aware, some things which are doubtful with some which are certain; forced indeed by the narrowness of the subject, which affords very little of undisputed

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* Dr Jasper Mayne, who published a translation of some select dialogues of Lucian, in folio, in 1664.

† I follow Mr Malone in reading *might*; the printed copy has *must*.

‡ This is a gross mistake, 180 years intervening between the death of Aurelius and the reign of Julian.

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truth. Yet I find myself obliged to do right to Monsieur d'Ablancourt,* who is not positively of opinion, that Suidas was the author of this fable; but rather that it descended to him by the tradition of former times, yet without any certain ground of truth. He concludes it, however, to be a calumny, perhaps a charitable kind of lie, to deter others from satirizing the new dogmas of Christianity, by the judgment shewn in Lucian. We find nothing in his writings, which gives any hint of his professing our belief; but being naturally curious, and living not only amongst Christians, but in the neighbourhood of Judea, he might reasonably be supposed to be knowing in our points of faith, without believing them. He ran a muck, and laid about him on all sides with more fury on the heathens, whose religion he professed; he struck at ours but casually, as it came in his way, rather than as he sought it; he contemned it too much to write in earnest against it.

We have indeed the highest probabilities for our revealed religion; arguments which will preponderate with a reasonable man, upon a long and careful disquisition; but I have always been of opinion, that we can demonstrate nothing, because the subject-matter is not capable of a demonstration. It is the particular grace of God, that any man believes the mysteries of our faith; which I think a conclusive argument against the doctrine of persecution in any church. And though I am absolutely convinced, as I heartily thank God I am, not only

* Nicolas Perrot, Sieur d'Ablancourt, whose translation of the Dialogues of Lucian into French was first published at Paris in 1634. His continuation of the True History of Lucian is very much in the tone of the original.

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of the general principles of Christianity, but of all truths necessary to salvation in the Roman church, yet I cannot but detest our inquisition, as it is practised in some foreign parts, particularly in Spain and in the Indies.

Those reasons, which are cogent to me, may not prevail with others, who bear the denomination of Christians; and those which are prevalent with all Christians, in regard of their birth and education, may find no force, when they are used against Mahometans or heathens. To instruct is a charitable duty; to compel, by threatenings and punishment, is the office of a hangman, and the principle of a tyrant.

But my zeal in a good cause, as I believe, has transported me beyond the limits of my subject. I was endeavouring to prove, that Lucian had never been a member of the Christian church; and methinks it makes for my opinion, that, in relating the death of Peregrinus, who, being born a Pagan, pretended afterwards to turn Christian, and turned himself publicly at the Olympic games, at his death professing himself a cynic philosopher, it seems, I say, to me, that Lucian would not have so severely declaimed against this Proteus, (which was another of Peregrinus his names,) if he himself had been guilty of that apostacy.

I know not that this passage has been observed by any man before me;* and yet in this very place it is, that this author has more severely handled our belief, and more at large, than in any other part of all his writings, excepting only the Dialogue of

* This observation had been made by Gilbertas Cognatus, and by Thomas Hickes, in his Life of Lucian, printed in 1684. MALONE.

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Triephon and Critias,* wherein he lashes his own false gods with more severity than the true; and where the first Christians, with their cropped hair, their whining voices, melancholy faces, mournful discourses, and nasty habits, are described with a greater air of Calvinists or Quakers, than of Roman Catholics or Church-of-England men.

After all, what if this discourse last mentioned, and the rest of the dialogues wherein the Christians are satirized, were none of Lucian's? The learned and ingenious Dr Mayne, whom I have before cited, is of this opinion, and confirms it by the attestation of Philander, Obsobœus, Mycillus, and Cognatus, whom since I have not read, or two of them but very superficially, I refer you for the faith of his quotation to the authors themselves.†

The next supposition concerning Lucian's religion is, that he was of none at all. I doubt not but the same people, who broached the story of his being once a Christian, followed their blow upon him in this second accusation.

There are several sorts of Christians at this day, reigning in the world, who will not allow any man to believe in the Son of God, whose other articles of faith are not in all things conformable to theirs. Some of these exercise this rigid and severe kind of charity, with a good intent of reducing several sects into one common church; but the spirit of others is evidently seen by their detraction, their malice, their spitting venom, their raising false reports of

* Entitled "Philopatris." The Christian religion, and its mysteries, are ridiculed in this piece with very little ceremony.

† Gesner has written a long Latin essay upon this point, which is subjoined to the third volume of Lucian's works, in the quarto edition of Hemsterhucius.

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those who are not of their communion. I wish the ancientness of these censorious principles may be proved by better arguments, than by any near resemblance they have with the primitive believers. But till I am convinced that Lucian has been charged with atheism of old, I shall be apt to think that this accusation is very modern.

One of Lucian's translators pleads in his defence, that it was very improbable a man, who has laughed paganism out of doors, should believe no God; that he, who could point to the sepulchre of Jupiter in Crete, as well as our Tertullian, should be an atheist. But this argument, I confess, is of little weight to prove him a deist, only because he was no polytheist. He might as well believe in none, as in many gods: and on the other side, he might believe in many, as Julian did, and not in one. For my own part, I think it is not proved that either of them were apostates, though one of them, in hopes of an empire, might temporize, while Christianity was the mode at court. Neither is our author cleared any thing the more, because his writings have served, in the times of the heathens, to destroy that vain, unreasonable, and impious religion; *that* was an oblique service, which Lucian never intended us; for his business, like that of some modern polemics, was rather to pull down every thing, than to set up any thing. With what show of probability can I urge in his defence, that one of the greatest among the fathers has drawn whole homilies from our author's dialogue, since I know that Lucian made them not for that purpose? The occasional good which he has done, is not to be imputed to him. St Chrysostom, St Augustin, and many others, have applied his arguments on better motives than their author proposed to himself in framing them.

These reasons, therefore, as they make nothing

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against his being an atheist, so they prove nothing of his believing one God; but only leave him as they found him, and leave us in as great an obscurity concerning his religion as before. I may be as much mistaken in my opinion as these great men have been before me; and this is very probable, because I know less of him than they; yet I have read him over more than once, and therefore will presume to say, that I think him either one of the Eclectic* school, or else a Sceptic: I mean, that he either formed a body of philosophy for his own use, out of the opinions and dogmas of several heathen philosophers, disagreeing amongst themselves, or that he doubted of every thing; weighed all opinions, and adhered to none of them; only used them as they served his occasion for the present dialogue, and perhaps rejected them in the next. And indeed this last opinion is the more probable of the two, if we consider the genius of the man, whose image we may clearly see in the glass which he holds before us of his writings, which reflects him to our sight.

Not to dwell on examples, with which his works are amply furnished, I will only mention two. In one, Socrates convinces his friend Chærephon of the power of the gods in transformations, and of a supreme Providence which accompanies that power in the administration of the world. In another, he confutes Jupiter, and pulls him down from heaven to earth, by his own Homerical chain; and makes him only a subservient slave to blind eternal Fate. I might add, that he is, in one half of his book, a Stoic, in the other an Epicurean; never constant to himself in any scheme of divinity, unless it be in

* I follow Mr Malone in reading *eclectic* for *elective*.

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despising his gentile gods. And this derision, as it shews the man himself, so it gives us an idea of the age in which he lived; for if that had been devout or ignorant, his scoffing humour would either have been restrained, or had not passed unpunished; all knowing ages being naturally sceptic, and not at all bigotted; which, if I am not much deceived, is the proper character of our own.

To conclude this article: He was too fantastical, too giddy, too irresolute, either to be any thing at all, or any thing long; and in this view I cannot think he was either a steady atheist, or a deist, but a doubter, a sceptic, as he plainly declares himself to be, when he puts himself under the name of Hermotimus the Stoic, in the dialogue called the "Dialogue of the Sects."

As for his morals, they are spoken of as variously as his opinions. Some are for decrying him more than he deserves; his defenders themselves dare not set him up for a pattern of severe virtue. No man is so profligate, as openly to profess vice; and therefore it is no wonder, if under the reign of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, of which the last was his patron and benefactor, he lived not so much a libertine as he had it to be in his nature. He is more accused for his love of boys than of women. Not that we have any particular story to convince us of this detestable passion in him; but his own writings bear this record against him, that he speaks often of it, and I know not that ever he condemns it. Repeated expressions, as well as repeated actions, witness some secret pleasure in the deed, or at least some secret inclination to it. He seems to insinuate, in his "Dialogue of Loves," that Socrates was given to this vice; but we find not that he blames him for it, which, if he had been wholly innocent himself, it became a philosopher to

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have done. But as we pass over a foul way as hastily as we can, so I will leave this abominable subject, which strikes me with horror when I name it.

If there be any who are guilty of this sin, we may assure ourselves they will never stop at any other; for when they have overleaped the bounds of nature, they run so fast to all other immoralities, that the grace of God, without a miracle, can never overtake them.

Lucian is accused likewise for his writing too lusciously in his "Dialogue of the Harlots."* It has been the common fault of all satirists, to make vice too amiable, while they expose it; but of all men living, I am the most unfit to accuse Lucian, who am so little able to defend myself from the same objection. We find not, however, that Lucian was charged with the wantonness of his "Dialogues" in his own life-time. If he had been, he would certainly have answered for himself, as he did to those who accused him for exposing Socrates, Plato, Diogenes, and other great philosophers, to the laughter of the people, when Jupiter sold them by an inch of candle. But, to confess the truth, [as] I am of their opinion, who think that answer of his not over-ingenuous, viz. that he only attacked the false philosophers of their sects, in their persons whom he honoured; so I am persuaded, that he could not have alleged more in his excuse for these "Dialogues," than that as he taught harlots to deceive, so, at the same time, he discovered their deceits to the knowledge of young men, and thereby warned them to avoid the snare.

* The best judges have condemned Εταιρικοι Διαλογοι, or "Dialogues of the Harlots," as not being genuine. They are at any rate gross and devoid of humour.

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I find him not charged with any other faults, than what I have already mentioned. He was otherwise of a life as unblameable as any man, for aught we find to the contrary; and I have this probable inducement to believe it, because he had so honourable an employment under Marcus Aurelius, an emperor as clear-sighted as he was truly virtuous; for both which qualities we need not quote Lucian, who was so much obliged to him, but may securely appeal to Herodian, and to all the historians who have written of him,—besides the testimony of his own admirable works, which are yet in the hands of all the learned.

As for those who condemn our author for the too much gall and virulency of his satires, it is to be suspected, says Dr Mayne, that they themselves are guilty of those hypocrisies, crimes, and follies, which he so sharply exposes, and at the same time endeavours to reform. I may add, that, for the most part, he rather laughs like Horace, than bites like Juvenal. Indeed his genius was of kin to both, but more nearly related to the former. Some diseases are curable by lenitives; to others corrosives are necessary. Can a man inveigh too sharply against the cruelty of tyrants, the pride and vanity of the great, the covetousness of the rich, the baseness of the Sophists, and particularly of the Cynics, (who, while they preach poverty to others, are heaping up riches, and living in gluttony,) besides the wrangling of the sects amongst themselves about supreme happiness, which he describes at a drunken feast, and calls it the battle of the Lapithæ.

Excepting what already is excepted, he seems to me to be an enemy to nothing but to vice and folly. The pictures which he draws of Nigrinus and of Demonax are as fair as that of virtue herself, if, as

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the philosopher said, she could wear a body. And if we oppose to them the lives of Alexander the false prophet, and of Peregrinus, how pleasingly, and with how much profit, does the deformity of the last set off the beauty of the first!

Some of his censurers accuse him of flatness and want of wit in many places. These I suppose have read him in some Latin translations, which, I confess, are generally dull; and this is the only excuse I can make for them. Otherwise they accuse themselves too manifestly for want of taste or understanding. Of this number is the wretched author of the *Lucien en Belle Humeur*, who being himself as insipid as a Dutch poet, yet arraigns Lucian for his own fault; introduces the ghost of Ablancourt, confessing his coldness in many places, the poorness of his thoughts, and his want of humour; represents his readers tired and yawning at his ill buffoonery and false mirth, and sleeping over his melancholic stories, which are every where stuffed with improbabilities. He could have said no worse of a Leyden slip.*

The best on it is, the jaundice is only in his own eyes, which makes Lucian look yellow to him. All mankind will exclaim against him for preaching this doctrine; and be of opinion when they read his Lucian, that he looked in a glass when he drew his picture. I wish I had the liberty to lash this frog-land wit as he deserves; but when a speech is not seconded in Parliament, it falls of course; and this author has the whole senate of the learned to pull him down: *incipient omnes pro Cicerone loqui.*

It is to be acknowledged, that his best translator, Ablancourt, thinks him not a profound master in

* I presume, a cant phrase for a graft from that garden of knowledge.

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any sort of philosophy; but only that he skimmed enough from every sect, to serve his turn in rhetoric, which was his profession. This he gathers from his superficial way of arguing. But why may not another man reply in his defence, that he made choice of those kinds of reasons which were most capable of being made to shine in his facetious way of arguing; and those undoubtedly were not the most knotty, nor the deepest, but the most diverting by the sharpness of the raillery. Dr Mayne, so often praised, has another opinion of Lucian's learning, and the strength of his witty arguments, concluding on that subject in these words, or near them: "For my part, I know not to whose writings we owe more our Christianity, where the true God has succeeded a multitude of false,—whether to the grave confutation of Clemens Alexandrinus, Arnobius, Justin Martyr, St Augustin, Lactantius, &c. or the facetious wit of Lucian."—I cannot doubt but the treacherous translator would have given his hand to what the Englishman has said of their common author. The success has justified his opinion in the sight of all the world. Lucian's manner of convincing, was certainly more pleasant than that of the Christian writers, and we know the effect was full as powerful; so easily can the Eternal Wisdom draw good out of evil, and make his enemy subservient to the establishment of his faith.

I will not enlarge on the praises of his oratory. If we compare his style with the Greek historians, his contemporaries, or near his time, we shall find it much more pure than that of Plutarch, Dion, or Appian, though not so grave; because his subjects and theirs required to be treated after a different manner. It was not of an uniform web, says Mayne, like Thucydides, Polybius, and some others whom

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he names, but was somewhat peculiar to himself; his words well chosen, his periods round, the parts of his sentences harmoniously divided, a full flood or even a torrent of persuasion, without inequalities or swellings; such as might be put in equal comparison with the best orations of Demosthenes or Isocrates; not so dry as the first, nor so flowery as the last. His wit, says Ablancourt, was full of urbanity, that attic salt, which the French call, fine raillery; not obscene, not gross, not rude, but facetious, well mannered, and well bred: only he will not allow his love the quality last mentioned, but thinks it rustical, and according either to his own genius, or that of the age in which he lived.

If wit consists in the propriety of thoughts and words, (which I imagined I had first found out, but since am pleasingly convinced that Aristotle has made the same definition in other terms,) then Lucian's thoughts and words are always proper to his characters and his subject. If the pleasure arising from comedy and satire be either laughter, or some nobler sort of delight, which is above it, no man is so great a master of irony as our author. That figure is not only a keen, but a shining weapon in his hand; it glitters in the eyes of those it kills; his own gods, his greatest enemies, are not butchered by him, but fairly slain: they must acknowledge the hero in the stroke, and take the comfort which Virgil gives to a dying captain:—

Æneæ magni dextrâ cadis.

I know not whom Lucian imitated, unless it might be Aristophanes; (for you never find him mentioning any Roman wit, so much the Grecians thought themselves superior to their conquerors;) but he, who has best imitated him in Latin, is Eras-

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mus; and in French, Fontenelle, in his "Dialogues of the Dead," which I never read but with a new pleasure.

Any one may see, that our author's chief design was to dis-nest heaven of so many immoral and debauched deities; his next, to expose the mock philosophers; and his last, to give us examples of a good life in the persons of the true.

The rest of his discourses are on mixed subjects, less for profit than delight; and some of them too libertine.

The way which Lucian chose of delivering these profitable and pleasing truths, was that of dialogue: a choice worthy of the author; happily followed, as I said above, by Erasmus and Fontenelle particularly, to whom I may justly add a triumvir of our own,—the reverend, ingenious, and learned Dr Eachard,* who, by using the same method, and the same ingredients of raillery and reason, has more baffled the philosopher of Malmesbury, than those who assaulted him with blunt heavy arguments, drawn from orthodox divinity; for Hobbes foresaw where those strokes would fall, and leaped aside before they could descend; but he could not avoid those nimble passes, which were made on him by a wit more active than his own, and which were within his body, before he could provide for his defence.

I will not here take notice of the several kinds of

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* The work alluded to, which was written by the Rev. Dr. John Eachard, (Master of Catharine Hall, in Cambridge, and author of the "Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy,") was published in 1671, and was entitled "Mr Hobbes's State of Nature considered; in a Dialogue between Philautos and Timothy."—MALONE.

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dialogue, and the whole art of it, which would ask an entire volume to perform. This has been a work long wanted, and much desired, of which the ancients have not sufficiently informed us; and I question whether any man now living can treat it accurately. Lucian, it seems, was very sensible of the difficult task, which he undertook in writing dialogues, as appears in his discourse against one who had called him Prometheus. He owns himself in this particular, to be like to him, to whom he was resembled, to be the inventor of a new work, attempted in a new manner,—the model of which he had from none before him; but adds withal, that if he could not give it the graces which belong to so happy an invention, he deserves to be torn by twelve vultures, instead of one, which preys upon the heart of that first man-potter. For, to quit the beaten road of the ancients, and take a path of his own choosing, he acknowledges to be a bold and ridiculous attempt, if it succeed not. "The mirth of dialogue and comedy in my work," says he, "is not enough to make it pleasing, because the union of two contraries may as well produce a monster as a miracle; as a centaur results from the joint natures of a horse and man. It is not but that from two excellent beings a third may arise of perfect beauty; but it is what I dare not promise to myself; for dialogue being a solemn entertainment of grave discourse, and comedy the wit and fooling of a theatre, I fear that through the corruption of two good things, I have made one bad. But whatever the child be, it is my own at least; I beg not with another's brat upon my back. From which of the ancients should I have stolen or borrowed it? My chimeras have no other being than my own imagination; let every man produce who can;

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and whether this be a lawful birth, or a misshapen mass, is left for the present age, and for posterity, to judge?

This is the sense of my author's words contracted in a narrow compass; for, if you will believe Ablancourt, and others, his greatest fault is, that he exhausts his argument,—like Ovid, knows not when to give over, but is perpetually galloping beyond his stage.

But though I cannot pursue our author any farther, I find myself obliged to say something of those translators of the following Dialogues, whom I have the honour to know, as well as of some other translations of this author, and a word or two of the translation itself.

As for the translators, all of them, that I know, are men of established reputation, both for wit and learning, at least sufficiently known to be so among all the finer spirits of the age. Sir Henry Sheers has given many proofs of his excellence in this kind; for while we, by his admirable address, enjoy Polybius in our mother tongue, we can never forget the hand that bestowed the benefit. The learning and judgment above his age, which every one discovers in Mr Moyle,* are proofs of those abilities he has shewn in his country's service, when he was chose to serve it in the senate, as his father had done.

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* This gentleman, whom our author has again mentioned with esteem, in the "Parallel of Poetry and Painting," (Vol. XVII. p. 312,) was the son of Sir Walter Moyle, and was born in the year 1672. He was educated to the study of law, and became a member of Parliament in 1695. He composed a variety of treatises, on various subjects, which are comprized in a collection of three volumes 8vo, the last being posthumous. Mr Moyle died in 1721.

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The wit of Mr Blount,* and his other performances, need no recommendation from me; they have made too much noise in the world to need a herald. There are some other persons concerned in this work, whose names deserve a place among the foremost, but that they have not thought fit to be known, either out of a bashful diffidence of their own performance, or out of apprehension of the censure of an ill-natured and ill-judging age; for criticism is now become mere hangman's work, and meddles only with the faults of authors; nay, the critic is disgusted less with their absurdities than excellence; and you cannot displease him more than in leaving him little room for his malice, in your correctness and perfection; though that indeed is what he never allows any man; for like the bed of Procrustes, they stretch or cut off an author to its

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* Charles Blount, the son of Sir Henry, and brother to Sir Edward Pope Blount. He early appeared as a defender and admirer of Dryden, by publishing an answer to Leigh's "Censure of the Rota on the Conquest of Granada." It was entitled, "Mr Dryden Vindicated, in Reply to the Friendly Vindication of Mr Dryden, with Reflections on the Rota." Mr Blunt distinguished himself as a friend to civil liberty during the crisis preceding the Revolution; but was still better known by the deistical tracts entitled, "*Anima Mundi*," "Life of Appollonius Tyaneus," "Diana of the Ephesians," and the "*Religio Laici*," which last he published anonymously in 1683, and inscribed to our author.

The death of Blount was voluntary. Having lost his wife, the daughter of Sir Timothy Tyrrel of Shotover, he fell in love with her sister, and being unable to remove her scruples upon the lawfulness of their union, shot himself in a fit of despair, in August 1693. His miscellaneous works were published by Galden in 1695.

He was a man of deep and extensive reading, and probably better qualified, in point of learning, to translate Lucian, than most of his coadjutors.

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length. These spoilers of Parnassus are a just excuse for concealing the name, since most of their malice is levelled more at the person than the thing; and as a sure mark of their judgment, they will extol to the skies the anonymous work of a person they will not allow to write common sense.

But this consideration of our modern critics has led me astray, and made me insensibly deviate from the subject before me; the modesty or caution of the anonymous translators of the following work. Whatever the motive of concealing their names may be, I shall not determine; but it is certain, nothing could more contribute to make a perfect version of Lucian, than a confederacy of many men of parts and learning to do him justice. It seems a task too hard for any one to undertake; the burden would indeed be insupportable, unless we did what the French have done in some of their translations, allow twenty years to perfect the work, and bestow all the brightest intervals, the most sprightly hours, to polish and finish the work.*

But this has not been the fate of our author hitherto; for Lucian, that is the sincere example of attic eloquence, as Grævius says of him, is only a mass of solecism, and mere vulgarisms in Mr Spence.† I do not think it worth my while to rake into the filth of so scandalous a version; nor had I vouchsafed so much as to take notice of it, had it not been so gross an affront to the memory of Lucian, and so great a scandal to our nation. D'Ablancourt has taken a great deal of pains to

* This, and two or three other passages, shew that this Life was written hastily, and that it had not been carefully revised by the author. MALONE.

† Ferrand Spence, who published a translation of Lucian's Dialogues in four volumes, 8vo., in 1684.

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furnish this intruder into print, with Lucian, in a language more known to him than Greek; nay, he has left him not one crabbed idiom to study for, since he has admirably clothed him in a garb more familiar to the moderns, still keeping the sense of his author in view. But in spite of all these helps, these leading-strings were not sufficient to keep Mr Spence from falling to the ground every step he made; while he makes him speak in the style and language of a jack-pudding, not a master of eloquence, admired for it through all the ages since he wrote. But too much of this trifler.

I have said enough already of the version of the learned Dr Mayne, to shew my approbation of it; but it is only a select parcel of Lucian's Dialogues which pleased him most, but far from the whole. As for any other translation, if there be any such in our language, it is what I never saw,* and suppose it must be antiquated, or of so inferior a degree, as not even to rival Spence.

The present translation, as far as I can judge by what I have seen, is no way inferior to Ablancourt's, and in many things is superior. It has indeed the advantage of appearing in a language more strong and expressive than French, and by the hands of gentlemen who perfectly understand him and their own language.

This has brought me to say a word or two about translation in general; in which no nation might more excel than the English, though, as matters are now managed, we come so far short of the French. There may indeed be a reason assigned, which bears a very great probability; and that is,

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* Francis Hickes published a translation of Select Dialogues from Lucian, 4to. 1634.

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that here the booksellers are the undertakers of works of this nature, and they are persons more devoted to their own gain than the public honour. They are very parsimonious in rewarding the wretched scribblers they employ; and care not how the business is done, so that it be but done. They live by selling titles, not books; and if that carry off one impression, they have their ends, and value not the curses they and their authors meet with from the bubbled chapmen. While translations are thus at the disposal of the booksellers, and have no better judges or rewarders of the performance, it is impossible that we should make any progress in an art so very useful to an inquiring people, and for the improvement and spreading of knowledge, which is none of the worst preservatives against slavery.

It must be confessed, that when the bookseller has interest with gentlemen of genius and quality, above the mercenary prospects of little writers, as in that of Plutarch's lives,* and this of Lucian, the reader may satisfy himself that he shall have the author's spirit and soul in the traduction. These gentlemen know very well, that they are not to creep after the words of their author, in so servile a manner as some have done; for that must infallibly throw them on a necessity of introducing a new mode of diction and phraseology with which we are not at all acquainted, and would incur that censure which my Lord Dorset made formerly on those of Mr Spence, viz. that he was so cunning a translator, that a man must consult the original, to understand the version. For every language has a propriety and idiom peculiar to it-

* Vol. XVII. p. 1.

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self, which cannot be conveyed to another without perpetual absurdities.

The qualification of a translator, worth reading, must be, a mastery of the language he translates out of, and that he translates into; but if a deficience be to be allowed in either, it is in the original; since if he be but master enough of the tongue of his author, as to be master of his sense, it is possible for him to express that sense with eloquence in his own, if he have a thorough command of that. But without the latter, he can never arrive at the useful and the delightful; without which reading is a penance and fatigue.

It is true that there will be a great many beauties, which in every tongue depend on the diction, that will be lost* in the version of a man not skilled in the original language of the author; but then on the other side, first it is impossible to render all those little ornaments of speech in any two languages; and if he have a mastery in the sense and spirit of his author, and in his own language have a style and happiness of expression, he will easily supply all that is lost by that defect.

A translator that would write with any force or spirit of an original, must never dwell on the words of his author. He ought to possess himself entirely, and perfectly comprehend the genius and sense of his author, the nature of the subject, and the terms of the art or subject treated of; and then he will express himself as justly, and with as much life, as if he wrote an original; whereas, he who copies word for word, loses all the spirit in the tedious transfusion.

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* Mr Malone substitutes *lost* for *left*.

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I would not be understood that he should be at liberty to give such a turn as Mr Spence has in some of his; where for the fine raillery and attic salt of Lucian, we find the gross expressions of Billingsgate, or Moorfields and Bartholomew Fair. For I write not to such translators, but to men capacious of the soul and genius of their authors, without which all their labour will be of no use but to disgrace themselves, and injure the author that falls into their slaughter-house.

I believe I need give no other rules to the reader than the following version, where example will be stronger than precept, to which I now refer them; in which a man justly qualified for a translator will discover many rules extremely useful to that end. But [to] a man who wants these natural qualifications which are necessary for such an undertaking, all particular precepts are of no other use, than to make him a more remarkable coxcomb.

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DRYDEN'S LETTERS.

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LETTERS OF DRYDEN.

THE Letters of Dryden, so far as hitherto given to the public, are, with a few exceptions, singularly uninteresting. To the publication of some, which are known to exist, there were found to occur still stronger objections. I have been only able to add one to those collected by Mr Malone; and I was strongly tempted to omit several. There is, however, a satisfaction in seeing how such a man expressed himself, even upon the most trivial occasions; and I have therefore retained those complimentary acknowledgments of turkeys, marrow-puddings, and bacon, which have nothing but such a consideration to recommend them.

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DRYDEN'S LETTERS.

LETTER I.

TO THE FAIRE HANDS OF MADAME HONOR DRYDEN, THESE CRAVE ADMITTANCE.*

MADAME, Camb. May 23, 16[55.]

If you have received the lines I sent by the reverend Levite, I doubt not but they have exceedingly wrought upon you; for beeing so longe in a clergyman's pocket, assuredly they have acquired more sanctity than theire authour meant them. Alasse, Madame! for ought I know, they may

* The lady to whom this letter is addressed was our author's first cousin, one of the daughters of his uncle, Sir John Dryden. She probably was born, (says Mr Malone,) about the year 1637, and died, unmarried, some time after 1707.

The seal, (he adds,) under which runs a piece of blue ribband, is a crest of a demi-lion, on a wreath, holding in his paws an armillary sphere at the end of a stand. The letter seems in reply to one from the fair lady, with a present of writing materials. It is a woeful sample of the gallantry of the time, alternately coarse and pedantic.

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become a sermon ere they could arrive at you; and believe it, haveing you for the text, it could scarcely proove bad, if it light upon one that could handle it indifferently. But I am so miserable a preacher, that though I have so sweet and copious a subject, I still fall short in my expressions; and, instead of an use of thanksgiving, I am allways makeing one of comfort, that I may one day againe have the happinesse to kisse your faire hand; but that is a message I would not so willingly do by letter, as by word of mouth.

This is a point, I must confesse, I could willingly dwell longer on; and, in this case, what ever I say you may confidently take for gospell. But I must hasten. And indeed, Madame, (*beloved* I had almost sayd,) hee had need hasten who treats of you; for to speake fully to every part of your excellencyes, requires a longer houre than most persons * have allotted them. But, in a word, your selfe hath been the best expositor upon the text of your own worth, in that admirable comment you wrote upon it; I meane your incomparable letter. By all that's good, (and you, Madame, are a great part of my oath,) it hath put mee so farre besides my selfe, that I have scarce patience to write prose, and my pen is stealing into verse every time I kisse your letter. I am sure, the poor paper smarts for my idolatry, which, by wearing it continually neere my brest, will, at last, be burnt and martyrd in those flames of adoration, which it hath kindled in mee. But I forgett, Madame, what raritys your letter came fraught with, besides words. You are such a

* Person *quasi* parson, which word was originally so spelled. The custom of preaching by an hour-glass has been before noticed.

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deity that commands worship by provideing the sacrifice. You are pleasd, Madame, to force me to write, by sending me materialls, and compell me to my greatest happinesse. Yet, though I highly value your magnificent presente, pardon mee, if I must tell the world, they are imperfect emblems of your beauty; for the white and red of waxe and paper are but shaddowes of that vermillion and snow in your lips and forehead; and the silver of the inkehorne, if it presume to vye in whitenesse with your purer skinne, must confesse itselfe blacker then the liquor it containes. What then do I more then retrieve your own guifts, and present you with that paper adulterated with blotts, which you gave spotlesse?

> For, since 'twas mine, the white hath lost its hiew,
> To show 'twas n'ere it selfe, but whilst in you;
> The virgin waxe hath blusht it selfe to red,
> Since it with mee hath lost its maydenhead.
> You, fairest nymph, are waxe. Oh! may you bee
> As well in softnesse, as in purity!
> Till fate, and your own happy choice, reveale,
> Whom you so farre shall blesse, to make your seale.

Fairest Valentine, the unfeigned wishe of your humble votary,

Jo. Dryden.

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LETTER II.

TO [JOHN WILMOT,] EARL OF ROCHESTER.

MY LORD, Tuesday. [July, 1673.]

I HAVE accused my selfe this month together, for not writing to you. I have called my selfe by the names I deserved, of unmannerly and ungratefull. I have been uneasy, and taken up the resolutions of a man, who is betwixt sin and repentance, convinc'd of what he ought to do, and yet unable to do better. At the last, I deferred it so long, that I almost grew hardened in the neglect; and thought I had suffered so much in your good opinion, that it was in vain to hope I could redeem it. So dangerous a thing it is to be inclin'd to sloath, that I must confess, once for all, I was ready to quit all manner of obligations, and to receive, as if it were my due, the most handsome compliment, couch'd in the best language I have read, and this too from my Lord of Rochester, without shewing myself sensible of the favour. If your Lordship could condescend so far to say all those things to me, which I ought to have say'd to you, it might reasonably be concluded, that you had enchanted me to believe those praises, and that I own-

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* A copy of this letter is in the Museum, MSS. Harl. 7003. The Dedication alluded to, must have been that of "Marriage A-la-Mode," to which Rochester had replied by a letter of thanks; and we have here Dryden's reply. (See Vol. I. p. 181, and Vol. IV. p. 235.) The date is supplied by Mr Malone from internal evidence.

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ed them in my silence. 'Twas this consideration that moved me at last to put off my idleness. And now the shame of seeing my selfe overpay'd so much for an ill Dedication, has made me almost repent of my address. I find, it is not for me to contend any way with your Lordship, who can write better on the meanest subject, then I can on the best. I have only engaged my selfe in a new debt, when I had hoped to cancell a part of the old one; and should either have chosen some other patron, whom it was in my power to have obliged by speaking better of him then he deserv'd, or have made your Lordship only a hearty Dedication of the respect and honour I had for you, without giving you the occasion to conquer me, as you have done, at my own weapon.

My only relief is, that what I have written is publique, and I am so much my own friend as to conceal your Lordship's letter; for that which would have given vanity to any other poet, has only given me confusion.

You see, my Lord, how far you have push'd me; I dare not own the honour you have done me, for fear of shewing it to my own disadvantage. You are that *rerum natura* of your own Lucretius;

*Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri.**

You are above any incense I can give you, and have all the happiness of an idle life, join'd with the good-nature of an active. Your friends in town are ready to envy the leisure you have given your selfe in the country, though they know you are only their steward, and that you treasure up but so much

* Lord Rochester translated some part of Lucretius.

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health as you intend to spend on them in winter. In the mean time, you have withdrawn your selfe from attendance, the curse of courts; you may think on what you please, and that as little as you please; for, in my opinion, thinking it selfe is a kind of pain to a witty man; he finds so much more in it to disquiet than to please him. But I hope your Lordship will not omitt the occasion of laughing at the great Duke of B[uckingham,] who is so uneasy to himselfe by pursuing the honour of lieutenant-general, which flyes him, that he can enjoy nothing he possesses,* though, at the same time, he is so unfit to command an army, that he is the only man in the three nations, who does not know it; yet he still picques himself, like his father, to find another Isle of Rhe in Zealand;† thinking this disappointment an injury to him, which is indeed a favour, and will not be satisfied but with his own ruin and with ours. 'Tis a strange quality in a man to love idleness so well as to destroy his estate by it; and yet, at the same time, to pursue so violently the most toilsome and most unpleasant part of business. These observations would soon

* In the year 1672, Monsieur Schomberg was invited into England to command the army raised for the Dutch war, then encamped on Blackheath. He was to be joined in this command with Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who held a commission of lieutenant-general only. But when Schomberg arrived, he refused to serve equally with Buckingham, and was made general; on which the other resigned his commission in disgust. (See Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham's *Memoirs*, p. 5.) Dryden, still smarting under the "Rehearsal," just then come out, was probably not sorry to take this opportunity to turn the author's pretensions into ridicule.

† Eight thousand land forces were embarked on board the English fleet, to make a descent in Zealand.

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run into lampoon, if I had not forsworn that dangerous part of wit; not so much out of good nature, but lest from the inborn vanity of poets I should shew it to others, and betray my selfe to a worse mischief than what I do to my enemy. This has been lately the case of Etherege, who, translating a satyr of Boileau's, and changing the French names for English, read it so often, that it came to their ears who were concern'd, and forced him to leave off the design, ere it were half finish'd. Two of the verses I remember:

I call a spade, a spade; Eaton,* a bully;
Frampton,† a pimp; and brother John, a cully.

But one of his friends imagin'd those names not enough for the dignity of a satyr, and chang'd them thus:

I call a spade, a spade; Dunbar,‡ a bully:
Brounckard,§ a pimp; and Aubrey Vere,‖ a cully.

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* Sir John Eaton was a noted writer of songs at the time.

† Mr Malone conjectures Tregonwell Frampton, keeper of the royal stud at Newmarket; who was born in 1641, and died in 1727. Brother John must remain in obscurity.

‡ Probably the grandson of Sir George Hume, created Earl of Dunbar by James the First, in 1605.

§ Henry Brouncker, younger brother of William, Viscount Brouncker. He was a gentleman of the Duke of York's bedchamber, and carried the false order to slacken sail, after the great battle in 1665, when the Duke was asleep, by which the advantage gained in the victory was entirely lost. There is a great cloud over the story; but that Brouncker was an infamous character, must be concluded on all hands. He was expelled the House of Commons; and countenanced by the king more than he deserved, being "never notorious for any thing but the highest degree of impudence, and stooping to the most infamous offices."—Continuation of Clarendon's Life, quoted by Malone.

‖ Aubrey de Vere, the twentieth and last Earl of Oxford, of

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Because I deal not in satyr, I have sent your Lordship a prologue and epilogue, which I made for our players, when they went down to Oxford. I hear they have succeeded; and by the event your Lordship will judge how easy 'tis to pass any thing upon an university, and how gross flattery the learned will endure.* If your Lordship had been in town, and I in the country, I durst not have entertained you with three pages of a letter; but I know they are very ill things which can be tedious to a man who is fourscore miles from Covent Garden. 'Tis upon this confidence, that I dare almost promise to entertain you with a thousand *bagatelles* every week, and not to be serious in any part of my letter, but that wherein I take leave to call myself your Lordship's

Most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

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that family. This nobleman seduced an eminent actress (said, by some authorities, to be Mrs Marshall, but conjectured, by Mr Malone, to have been Mrs Davenport,) to exchange her profession for his protection. The epithet, applied to him in the lines, renders it improbable that he imposed on her by a mock-marriage, though the story is told by Count Hamilton, and others.

* The Prologue and Epilogue in question may have been those spoken by Mr Hart, and Mrs Marshall, (Vol. X. p. 328.) But, in this case, the date of their being delivered has been placed too late. Exact accuracy is of little consequence; but I fear the hint in the letter gives some reason for Tom Brown's alleging that Dryden flattered alternately the wits of the town at the cost of the university, and the university scholars at the expence of the London audience. I cry that facetious person mercy, for having said there was no proof of his accusation. See Vol. X. p. 113.

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LETTER III.

The following Note and Letter contain the determination of a dispute, and probably of a wager, which had been referred to our author by the parties. It concerns a passage in Creech's "Lucretius," and probably was written soon after the publication of that translation in 1682, *when it was a recent subject of conversation. The full passage in "Lucretius" runs thus:*

> Præterea quæcunque vetustate amovet ætas,
> Si penitus perimit, consumens materiam omnem,
> Unde animale genus generatim in lumina vitæ
> Reddugit Venus?———

Which Creech thus renders:

> *Besides, if o'er whatever years prevail,*
> *Should wholly perish, and its matter fail,*
> *How could the powers of all kind Venus breed*
> *A constant race of animals to succeed?*

The translation of Creech is at least complicated and unintelligible; and I am uncertain whether even Dryden's explanation renders it grammatical. Dryden speaks elsewhere with great applause of Creech's translation.

The original of this decision (in Dryden's hand-writing) is in the possession of Mrs White of Bownham-hall, Gloucestershire, and was most obligingly communicated to the editor by that lady, through the medium of Mr Constable of Edinburgh.

THE two verses, concerning which the dispute is raised, are these:

> Besides, if o're whatever yeares prevaile
> Shou'd wholly perish, and its matter faile.

The question arising from them is, whether any true gramaticall construction can be made of them? The objection is, that there is no nominative case appearing to the word *perish*, or that can be understood to belong to it.

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I have considered the verses, and find the authour of them to have notoriously bungled; that he has plac'd the words as confus'dly as if he had studied to do so. This notwithstanding, the very words, without adding or diminishing in theire proper sence, (or at least what the authour meanes,) may run thus:—*Besides, if what ever yeares prevaile over, should wholly perish, and its matter faile.*

I pronounce therefore, as impartially as I can upon the whole, that there *is* a nominative case, and that figurative, so as Terence and Virgil, amongst others, use it; that is, the whole clause precedent is the nominative case to *perish*. My reason is this, and I think it obvious; let the question be ask'd, what it is that should wholly perish, or that perishes? The answer will be, That which yeares prevaile over. If you will not admit a clause to be in construction a nominative case, the word *thing*, *illud*, or *quodcunque*, is to be understood, either of which words, in the feminine gender, agree with *res*, so that he meanes what ever *thing* time prevails over shou'd wholly perish, and its matter faile.

Lucretius his Latine runs thus:

Prætereà, quæcunque vetustate amovet ætas,
Si penitus perimit, consumens materiam omnem,
Unde animale genus, generatim in lumina vitæ
Redducit Venus? &c.

which ought to have been translated thus:

Besides, what ever time removes from view,
If he destroys the stock of matter too,
From whence can kindly propagation spring,
Of every creature, and of every thing?

I translated it *whatever* purposely, to shew, that *thing* is to be understood; which, as the words are

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heere plac'd, is so very perspicuous, that the nominative case cannot be doubted.

The word, *perish*, used by Mr Creech, is a verb neuter; where Lucretius puts *perimit*, which is active; a licence which, in translating a philosophical poet, ought not to be taken; for some reason, which I have not room to give. But to comfort the loser, I am apt to believe, that the cross-grain confused verse put him so much out of patience, that he wou'd not suspect it of any sence.

SIR,

THE company having done me so great an honour as to make me their judge, I desire from you the favour of presenting my acknowledgments to them; and shou'd be proud to heere from you, whether they rest satisfyed in my opinion, who am,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.*

LETTER IV.

TO THE REV. DR BUSBY.

HONOUR'D SIR, Wednesday Morning, [1682.]

WE have, with much ado, recover'd my younger sonn,† who came home extreamly sick of a violent

* There is no address or superscription.

† John Dryden admitted a King's scholar in 1682.

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cold, and, as he thinks him selfe, a chine-cough. The truth is, his constitution is very tender; yet his desire of learning, I hope, will inable him to brush through the college. He is allwayes gratefully acknowledging your fatherly kindnesse to him; and very willing to his poore power, to do all things which may continue it. I have no more to add, but only to wish the eldest may also deserve some part of your good opinion; for I believe him to be of vertuous and pious inclinations; and for both, I dare assure you, that they can promise to themselves no farther share of my indulgence, then while they carry them selves with that reverence to you, and that honesty to all others, as becomes them. I am, honour'd Sir,

Your most obedient servant and scholar,

JOHN DRYDEN.*

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* This letter from Lady Elizabeth Dryden seems to have been written at the same time, and on the same subject:

HONNORED SIR, Ascension Day, [1682.]

I HOPE I need use noe other argument to you in excuse of my sonn for not coming to church to Westminster then this, that he now lies at home, and thearfore cannot esilly goe soe far backwards and forwards. His father and I will take care that he shall duely goe to church heare, both on holydayes and Sundays, till he comes to be more nearly under your care in the college. In the mean time, will you please to give me leave to accuse you of forgetting your prommis conserning my eldest sonn, who, as you once assured me, was to have one night in a weeke alowed him to be at home, in considirasion both of his health and cleanliness. You know, Sir, that promises mayd to women, and espiceally mothers, will never faille to be cald upon; and thearfore I will add noe more, but that I am, at this time, your remembrancer, and allwayes, honnord Sir,

Your humble servant,

E. DRYDEN.

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LETTER V.

TO THE REV. DR BUSBY.

SIR, [1682.]

IF I could have found in my selfe a fitting temper to have waited upon you, I had done it the day you dismissed my sonn * from the college; for he did the message: and by what I find from Mr Meredith, as it was delivered by you to him; namely, that you desired to see me, and had somewhat to say to me concerning him. I observed likewise somewhat of kindnesse in it, that you sent him away, that you might not have occasion to correct him. I examined the business, and found, it concern'd his having been *custos* † foure or five dayes together. But if he admonished, and was not believed, because other boyes combined to discredit him with false witnesseing, and to save them selves,

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* His eldest son Charles, as Mr Malone supposes.

† In the hall of the college of Westminster, when the boys are at dinner, it is, *ex officio*, the place of the second boy, in the second election, to keep order among the two under elections; and if any word, after he has ordered silence, be spoken, except in Latin, he says to the speaker, *tu es* CUSTOS; and this term passes from the second speaker to the third, or more, till dinner is over. Whoever is then *custos*, has an imposition.

It is highly probable, (adds the very respectable gentleman, to whom I am indebted for this information,) that there had formerly been *a tessera*, or *symbolum*, delivered from boy to boy, as at some French schools now, and that *custos* meant *custos tesseræ, symboli*, &c.; but at Westminster, the symbol is totally unknown at present. MALONE.

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perhaps his crime is not so great. Another fault, it seems, he made, which was going into one Hawkes his house, with some others; which you hapning to see, sent your servant to know who they were, and he onely returned you my sonn's name; so the rest escaped.

I have no fault to find with my sonn's punishment; for that is, and ought to be, reserv'd to any master, much more to you, who have been his father's. But your man was certainly to blame to name him onely; and 'tis onely my respect to you, that I do not take notice of it to him. My first rash resolutions were, to have brought things past any composure, by immediately sending for my sonn's things out of college; but upon recollection, I find, I have a double tye upon me not to do it: one, my obligations to you for my education; another, my great tendernesse of doeing any thing offensive to my Lord Bishop of Rochester,* as cheife governour of the college. It does not consist with the honour I beare him and you to go so precipitately to worke; no, not so much as to have any difference with you, if it can possibly be avoyded. Yet, as my sonn stands now, I cannot see with what credit he can be elected; for, being but sixth, and (as you are pleased to judge,) not deserving that neither, I know not whether he may not go immediately to Cambridge, as well as one of his own election went to Oxford this yeare† by your con-

* Dr John Dolben, then Bishop of Rochester, afterwards of York. See Vol. IX. p. 303.

† Mr Malone says, "The person meant was Robert Morgan, who was elected with Charles Dryden into the college of Westminster, in 1680, and is the only one of those then admitted, who was elected to Oxford in 1682. That circumstance, therefore, ascertains the year when this letter was written."

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sent. I will say nothing of my second sonn, but that, after you had been pleased to advise me to waite on my Lord Bishop for his favour, I found he might have had the first place, if you had not opposed it; and I likewise found at the election, that, by the pains you had taken with him, he in some sort deserved it.

I hope, sir, when you have given your selfe the trouble to read thus farr, you, who are a prudent man, will consider, that none complaine, but they desire to be reconciled at the same time: there is no mild expostulation, at least, which does not intimate a kindness and respect in him who makes it. Be pleas'd, if there be no merit on my side, to make it your own act of grace to be what you were formerly to my sonn. I have done something, so far to conquer my own spirit as to ask it; and, indeed, I know not with what face to go to my Lord Bishop, and to tell him I am takeing away both my sonns; for though I shall tell him no occasion, it will looke like a disrespect to my old master, of which I will not be guilty, if it be possible. I shall add no more, but hope I shall be so satisfyed with a favourable answer from you, which I promise to my selfe from your goodnesse and moderation, that I shall still have occasion to continue,

Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.*

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* The two last letters are printed from Mr Malone's copy, to whom the originals were communicated by Mr John Nichols, author of the History of Leicestershire.

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LETTER VI.

TO LAURENCE HYDE, EARL OF ROCHESTER.*

MY LORD, [Perhaps August 1683.]

I KNOW not whether my Lord Sunderland has interceded with your Lordship for half a yeare of my salary; but I have two other advocates, my extreme wants, even almost to arresting, and my ill health, which cannot be repaired without immediate retireing into the country. A quarter's allowance is but the Jesuit's powder to my disease; the fit will return a fortnight hence. If I durst, I would plead a little merit, and some hazards of my life from the common enemyes; my refuseing advantages offered by them, and neglecting my beneficiall studyes, for the King's service: but I only thinke I merit not to sterve. I never apply'd myselfe to any interest contrary to your Lordship's; and on some occasions, perhaps not known to you, have not been unserviceable to the memory and reputation of my Lord, your father.† After this, my Lord, my conscience assures me, I may write boldly, though

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* To this curious and valuable letter, Mr Malone has added the address to Rochester and the date, both of which are conjectural. Hyde, Earl of Rochester, was made first commissioner of the treasury in 1679, and continued prime minister till September 1684. Let it be remembered by those men of talents, who may be tempted to engage in the sea of politics, that Dryden thus sued for what was his unquestionable due, within two years after having written "Absalom and Achitophel," and "The Medal," in defence of the government, to whom he was suppliant for so small a boon.

† Edward, Earl of Clarendon. It is uncertain in what manner our author undertook his defence.

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I cannot speake to you. I have three sonns growing to man's estate; I breed them all up to learning, beyond my fortune; but they are too hopefull to be neglected, though I want. Be pleased to looke on me with an eye of compassion. Some small employment would render my condition easy. The King is not unsatisfied of me; the Duke has often promised me his assistance; and your Lordship is the conduit through which they passe, either in the Customes, or the Appeals of the Excise,* or some other way, meanes cannot be wanting, if you please to have the will. 'Tis enough for one age to have neglected Mr Cowley, and sterv'd Mr Butler; but neither of them had the happiness to live till your Lordship's ministry. In the meane time, be pleased to give me a gracious and speedy answer to my present request of halfe a yeare's pention for my necessityes. I am going to write somewhat by his Majesty's command,† and cannot stir into the country for my health and studies, till I secure my family from want. You have many petitions of this nature, and cannot satisfy all; but I hope, from your goodness, to be made an exception to your general rules,‡ because I am, with all sincerity,

Your Lordship's
Most obedient humble servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

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* The place which our author here solicits, (worth only 200l. a-year,) was the first office that Addison obtained, which he used to call "the *little thing* given me by Lord Halifax." Locke also, after the Revolution, was a commissioner of appeals. MALONE.

† The "History of the League," entered on the Stationers' books early in 1684, and "Englished by his Majesties express command."

‡ This application was successful; and Dryden elsewhere ex-

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LETTER VII.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

The letters to Tonson are without dates. I have retained those which Mr Malone has attached to them, from circumstances of internal evidence which it seems unnecessary to detail, but which appear in general satisfactory, though not given as absolutely conclusive.

MR TONSON, Monday Morning, [1684.]

THE two melons you sent I received before your letter, which came foure houres after: I tasted one of them, which was too good to need an excuse; the other is yet untouched. You have written diverse things which give me great satisfaction; particularly that the History of the League is commended: and I hope the onely thing I feared in it is not found out.* Take it all together, and I dare say without vanity, 'tis the best translation of any history in English, though I cannot say 'tis the best history; but that is no fault of mine. I am glad my Lord Duke of Ormond has one; I did not forget him; but I thought his sorrows were too fresh upon him to receive a present of that nature.† For my Lord Roscommon's Essay,‡ I am of your opi-

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presses his gratitude, that his wants were attended to, and relieved during the penury of an exhausted Exchequer; Cowley's simile, he observed, was reversed, and Gideon's fleece was watered, while all around remained parched and arid.

* What this circumstance was cannot now be discovered.

† The Duchess of Ormond died July 1684.

‡ The first edition of Lord Roscommon's "Essay on Translated Verse" appeared in 1684, and a second edition was published by Jacob Tonson in 4to, early in 1685.

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nion, that you should reprint it, and that you may safely venture on a thousand more. In my verses before it, pray let the printer mend his errour, and let the line stand thus:

That heer his conqu'ring ancestors were nurs'd;—*

Charles his copy† is all true. The other faults my Lord Roscommon will mend in the booke, or Mr Chetwood‡ for him, if my Lord be gone for Ireland; of which, pray send me word.

Your opinion of the Miscellanyes§ is likewise mine: I will for once lay by the "*Religio Laici*," till another time. But I must also add, that since we are to have nothing but new, I am resolved we will have nothing but good, whomever we disoblige. You will have of mine, four Odes of Horace, which I have already translated; another small translation of forty lines from Lucretius; the whole story of Nisus and Eurialus, both in the fifth and the ninth of Virgil's Æneids: and I care not who translates them beside me; for let him be friend or foe, I will please myself, and not give off in consideration of any man. There will be forty lines more of Virgil in another place, to answer those of Lucretius: I

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* In the first edition it stood,

"That here his conqu'ring ancestors *was* nurs'd."

† Latin Verses by Charles Dryden, prefixed to Lord Roscommon's Essay.

‡ Knightly Chetwood. He wrote Lord Roscommon's life.

§ Dryden was now about to publish the second volume of the Miscellanies; in which it would appear to have been settled, that nothing should be inserted but what was new. "*Religio Laici*," therefore, as having been formerly published, was laid aside for the present.

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meane those very lines which Montagne has compared in those two poets; and Homer shall sleep on for me,—I will not now meddle with him. And for the Act which remains of the Opera,* I believe I shall have no leysure to mind it, after I have done what I proposed; for my business here is to unweary my selfe after my studyes, not to drudge...

I am very glad you have pay'd Mr Jones, because he has carryed him selfe so gentlemanlike to me; and, if ever it lyes in my power, I will requite it. I desire to know whether the Duke's House are makeing cloaths, and putting things in a readiness for the singing Opera, to be played immediately after Michaelmasse.† For the actors in the two playes ‡ which are to be acted of mine this winter, I had spoken with Mr Betterton by chance at the Coffee-house the afternoon before I came away; and I believe that the persons were all agreed on, to be just the same you mentioned; only Octavia was to be Mrs Butler, in case Mrs Cooke were not on the stage; and I know not whether Mrs Percival, who is a comedian, will do well for Benzayda.

I came hither for health, and had a kind of hectique feavour for a fortnight of the time: I am now much better. Poore Jacke § is not yet recovered of an intermitting feavour, of which this is the twelfth day; but he mends, and now begins to eat flesh: to add to this, my man, with over care of him, is

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* Probably "Albion and Albanius," which was afterwards completed and ready to be performed in Feb. 1684-5.

† The singing Opera was probably that of "King Arthur," to which "Albion and Albanius" was originally designed as a prelude. But it was not acted till after the Revolution.

‡ "All for Love," and "The Conquest of Granada."

§ His second son.

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fallen ill too, of the same distemper; so that I am deep in doctors, 'pothecaries, and nurses: but though many in this country fall sick of feavours, few or none dye. Your friend, Charles,* continues well. If you have any extraordinary newes, I should be glad to heare it. I will answer Mr Butler's letter next week; for it requires no hast.

I am yours,
JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER VIII.

FROM JACOB TONSON TO JOHN DRYDEN, ESQ.

SIR, [Probably written in Jan. or Feb. 1692-3.]†

I HAVE here returned y^e^ Ovid, w^ch^ I read w^ch^ a great deal of pleasure, and think nothing can be more entertaining; but by this letter you find I am not soe well satisfied as perhaps you might think. I hope at y^e^ same time the matter of fact I lay down in this letter will appear grounds for it, and w^ch^ I beg you wou'd concider of; and then I believe I shall at least bee excused.

You may please, S^r^, to remember, that upon my first proposal about y^e^ 3^d^ Miscellany, I offer'd fifty pounds, and talk'd of several authours, without naming Ovid. You ask'd if it shou'd not be guynneas, and said I shou'd not repent it; upon w^ch^ I imediately comply'd, and left it wholy to you what, and for y^e^ quantity too: and I declare it was the

* His eldest son.
† The Third Miscellany was published in July 1693.

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farthest in y^e^ world from my thoughts that by leaving it to you I should have the less. Thus the case stood when you went into Essex. After I came out of Northamptonshire I wrote to you, and reseived a letter dated Monday Oct. 3^d^, 92, from w^ch^ letter I now write word for word what followes:

"I am translating about six hundred lines, or somewhat less, of y^e^ first book of the Metamorphoses. If I cannot get my price, w^ch^ shall be twenty guynneas, I will translate the whole book; w^ch^ coming out before the whole translation, will spoyl Tate's undertakings. 'Tis one of the best I have ever made, and very pleasant. This, w^th^ Heroe and Leander, and the piece of Homer, (or, if it be not enough, I will add more,) will make a good part of a Miscellany."

Those, S^r^, are y^e^ very words, and y^e^ onely ones in that letter relating to that affair; and y^e^ Monday following you came to town.—After your arrivall you shew'd Mr Motteaux what you had done, (w^ch^ he told me was to y^e^ end of y^e^ story of Daphnis,) [Daphne,] and demanded, as you mention'd in your letter, twenty guyneas, w^ch^ that bookseller refus'd. Now, S^r^, I the rather believe there was just soe much done, by reason y^e^ number of lines you mention in yo^r^ letter agrees w^th^ y^e^ quantity of lines that soe much of y^e^ first book makes; w^ch^ upon counting y^e^ Ovid, I finde to be in y^e^ Lattin 566, in y^e^ English 759; and y^e^ bookseller told me there was noe more demanded of him for it.—Now, S^r^, what I entreat you wou'd please to consider of is this: that it is reasonable for me to expect at least as much favour from you as a strange bookseller; and I will never believe y^t^ it can be in y^r^ nature to use one y^e^ worse for leaveing it to you; and if the matter of fact as I state it be true, (and upon my word what I mention I can shew you in yo^r^ letter,) then pray,

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S^r^, consider how much dearer I pay then you offered it to y^e^ other bookseller; for he might have had to y^e^ end of y^e^ story of Daphnis for 20 guynneas, w^ch^ is in yo^r^ translation . . . 759 lines;
And then suppose 20 guyneas more for the same number . . . . . 759 lines;

that makes for 40 guyneas . . . . 1518 lines; and all that I have for fifty guyneas are but 1446; soe that, if I have noe more, I pay 10 guyneas above 40, and have 72 lines less for fifty, in proportion, than the other bookseller shou'd have had for 40, at y^e^ rate you offered him y^e^ first part. This is, Sir, what I shall take as a great favour if you please to think of. I had intentions of letting you know this before; but till I had paid y^e^ money, I would not ask to see the book, nor count the lines, least it shou'd look like a design of not keeping my word. When you have looked over y^e^ rest of what you have already translated, I desire you would send it; and I own y^t^ if you don't think fit to add something more, I must submit: 'tis wholly at yo^r^ choice, for I left it intirely to you; but I believe you cannot imagine I expected so little; for you were pleased to use me much kindlyer in Juvenall, wh^ch^ is not reckon'd soe easy to translate as Ovid. S^r^, I humbly beg yo^r^ pardon for this long letter, and upon my word I had rather have yo^r^ good will than any man's alive; and, whatever you are pleased to doe, will alway acknowledge my self, S^r^,

Yo^r^ most obliged humble Serv^t^,
J. TONSON.

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LETTER IX.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.*

MR TONSON, August 30. [1693.]

I am much asham'd of my self, that I am so much behind-hand with you in kindness. Above all things I am sensible of your good nature, in bearing me company to this place, wherein, besides the cost, you must needs neglect your own business; but I will endeavour to make you some amends; and therefore I desire you to command me something for your service. I am sure you thought my Lord Radclyffe† wou'd have done something: I ghess'd more truly, that he cou'd not; but I was too far ingag'd to desist, though I was tempted to it by the melancholique prospect I had of it. I have translated six hundred lines of Ovid; but I believe I shall not compasse his 772 lines under nine hundred or more of mine.—This time I cannot write to my wife, because he who is to carry my letter to Oundle, will not stay till I can write another. Pray, sir, let her know that I am well; and for feare the few damsins shou'd be all gone, desire her to buy me a sieve-full, to preserve whole, and not in mash.‡

I intend to come up at least a week before

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* The author was at this time in Northamptonshire. The original has no date but August 30th; but the year is ascertained by the reference to the Third Miscellany, which was published in July 1693.—MALONE.

† To whom the Third Miscellany is dedicated. I fear this alludes to some disappointment in the pecuniary compliment usual on such occasions.—See the Dedication, Vol. XII. p. 47.

‡ This commission will probably remind the reader of the poetic diet recommended by Bayes.—"If I am to write familiar things,

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Michaelmass; for Sir Matthew* is gone abroad, I suspect a wooeing, and his caleche is gone with him: so that I have been but thrice at Tichmarsh, of which you were with me once. This disappointment makes the place wearysome to me, which otherwise wou'd be pleasant.

About a fortnight ago I had an intimation from a friend by letter, that one of the secretaryes, I suppose Trenchard,† had informed the queen, that I had abus'd her government (those were the words) in my Epistle to my Lord Radcliffe; and that thereupon she had commanded her historiographer, Rymer, to fall upon my playes; which he assures me is now doeing. I doubt not his malice, from a former hint you gave me; and if he be employ'd, I am confident 'tis of his own seeking; who, you know, has spoken slightly of me in his last critique:‡ and that gave me occasion to snarl againe.§ In your next, let me know what you can learn of this

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as sonnets to Armida, and the like, I make use of *stewed prunes* only; but, when I have a grand design in hand, I ever take physic, and let blood; for, when you would have pure swiftness of thought, and fiery flights of fancy, you must have a care of the pensive part. In fine, you must purge the belly.

Smith. By my troth, sir, this is a most admirable receipt for writing.

Bayes. Ay, 'tis my secret; and, in good earnest, I think one of the best I have."—*Rehearsal*, Act I.

This is an instance of the minute and malicious diligence, with which the most trivial habits and tastes of our author were ridiculed in the "Rehearsal."

* Sir Matthew, with whom Dryden appears to have resided at this time, is unknown.

† Sir John Trenchard, who was made one of the Secretaries of State, March 23, 1691-2, died in office in April 1695.

‡ "A short View of Tragedy," published (as appears from the Gentleman's Journal, by P. Motteux,) in Dec. 1692. The date in the title-page is, 1693.

§ See Vol. XII. p. 45.

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matter. I am Mr Congreve's true lover, and desire you to tell him, how kindly I take his often remembrances of me: I wish him all prosperity, and hope I shall never loose his affection; nor yours, sir, as being

Your most faithfull,
And much obliged Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

I had all your letters.

Sir Matthew had your book when he came home last; and desir'd me to give you his acknowledgements.

LETTER X.

MR JOHN DENNIS* TO MR DRYDEN.

DEAR SIR,

You may see already by this presumptuous greeting, that encouragement gives as much assurance to friendship, as it imparts to love. You may see too, that a friend may sometimes proceed to acknowledge affection, by the very same degrees by which a lover declares his passion. This last at first confesses esteem, yet owns no passion but admiration. But as soon as he is animated by one kind expression, his look, his style, and his very soul are altered. But as sovereign beauties know very well, that he who confesses he esteems and admires them, implies that he loves them, or is in-

* Dennis, the critic, afterwards so unfortunately distinguished by the satire of Pope. Like Rymer, and others, he retained considerable reputation for critical acumen, until he attempted to illustrate his precepts by his own compositions.

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clined to love them: a person of Mr Dryden's exalted genius, can discern very well, that when we esteem him highly, 'tis respect restrains us, if we say no more. For where great esteem is without affection, 'tis often attended with envy, if not with hate; which passions detract even when they commend, and silence is their highest panegyrick. 'Tis indeed impossible, that I should refuse to love a man, who has so often given me all the pleasure that the most insatiable mind can desire: when at any time I have been dejected by disappointments, or tormented by cruel passions, the recourse to your verses has calm'd my soul, or raised it to transports which made it contemn tranquillity. But though you have so often given me all the pleasure I was able to bear, I have reason to complain of you on this account, that you have confined my delight to a narrower compass. Suckling, Cowley, and Denham, who formerly ravished me in every part of them, now appear tasteless to me in most; and Waller himself, with all his gallantry, and all that admirable art of his turns, appears three quarters prose to me. Thus 'tis plain, that your Muse has done me an injury; but she has made me amends for it. For she is like those extraordinary women, who, besides the regularity of their charming features, besides their engaging wit, have secret, unaccountable, enchanting graces; which though they have been long and often enjoyed, make them always new and always desirable.—I return you my hearty thanks for your most obliging letter. I had been very unreasonable, if I had repined that the favour arrived no sooner. 'Tis allowable to grumble at the delaying a payment; but to murmur at the deferring a benefit, is to be impudently ungrateful beforehand. The commendations which you give me, exceedingly sooth my vanity. For

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you with a breath can bestow or confirm reputation; a whole numberless people proclaims the praise which you give, and the judgments of three mighty kingdoms appear to depend upon yours. The people gave me some little applause before; but to whom, when they are in the humour, will they not give it? and to whom, when they are froward, will they not refuse it? Reputation with them depends upon chance, unless they are guided by those above them. They are but the keepers, as it were, of the lottery which Fortune sets up for renown; upon which Fame is bound to attend with her trumpet, and sound when men draw the prizes. Thus I had rather have your approbation than the applause of Fame. Her commendation argues good luck, but Mr Dryden's implies desert. Whatever low opinion I have hitherto had of myself, I have so great a value for your judgment, that, for the sake of that, I shall be willing henceforward to believe that I am not wholly desertless; but that you may find me still more supportable, I shall endeavour to compensate whatever I want in those glittering qualities, by which the world is dazzled, with truth, with faith, and with zeal to serve you; qualities which for their rarity, might be objects of wonder, but that men dare not appear to admire them, because their admiration would manifestly declare their want of them. Thus, Sir, let me assure you, that though you are acquainted with several gentlemen, whose eloquence and wit may capacitate them to offer their services with more address to you, yet no one can declare himself, with greater chearfulness, or with greater fidelity, or with more profound respect, than myself,

Sir,

Your most, &c.

JOHN DENNIS.

March 3, [1693-4.]

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LETTER XI.

TO MR JOHN DENNIS. [In answer to the foregoing.]

MY DEAR MR DENNIS, [Probably March 1693-4.]

WHEN I read a letter so full of my commendations as your last, I cannot but consider you as the master of a vast treasure, who having more than enough for yourself, are forced to ebb out upon your friends. You have indeed the best right to give them, since you have them in propriety; but they are no more mine when I receive them than the light of the moon can be allowed to be her own, who shines but by the reflexion of her brother. Your own poetry is a more powerful example, to prove that the modern writers may enter into comparison with the ancients, than any which Perrault could produce in France: yet neither he, nor you, who are a better critick, can persuade me, that there is any room left for a solid commendation at this time of day, at least for me.

If I undertake the translation of Virgil, the little which I can perform will shew at least, that no man is fit to write after him, in a barbarous modern tongue. Neither will his machines be of any service to a Christian poet. We see how ineffectually they have been tryed by Tasso, and by Ariosto. It is using them too dully, if we only make devils of his gods: as if, for example, I would raise a storm, and make use of Æolus, with this only difference of calling him Prince of the Air; what invention of mine would there be in this? or who would not see Virgil thorough me; only the same trick played over again by a bungling juggler? Boileau has well

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observed, that it is an easy matter in a Christian poem, for God to bring the Devil to reason. I think I have given a better hint for new machines in my preface to Juvenal; where I have particularly recommended two subjects, one of King Arthur's conquest of the Saxons, and the other of the Black Prince in his conquest of Spain. But the guardian angels of monarchys and kingdoms are not to be touched by every hand: a man must be deeply conversant in the Platonic philosophy, to deal with them; and therefore I may reasonably expect, that no poet of our age will presume to handle those machines, for fear of discovering his own ignorance; or if he should, he might perhaps be ingrateful enough not to own me for his benefactour.*

After I have confessed thus much of our modern heroic poetry, I cannot but conclude with Mr Rymer, that our English comedy is far beyond any thing of the ancients: and notwithstanding our irregularities, so is our tragedy. Shakspeare had a genius for it; and we know, in spite of Mr Rymer, that genius alone is a greater virtue (if I may so call it) than all other qualifications put together. You see what success this learned critick has found in the world, after his blaspheming Shakspeare.† Almost all the faults which he has discovered are truly there; yet who will read Mr Rymer, or not read Shakspeare? For my own part I reverence Mr Rymer's learning, but I detest his ill nature and his

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* Sir Richard Blackmore was doomed to accomplish this prophecy. See Vol. XI. p. 236. and the Life of Dryden, p. 6.

† In his Short View of Tragedy. See Vol. XII. pp. 45, 51.

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arrogance. I indeed, and such as I, have reason to be afraid of him, but Shakspeare has not.*

There is another part of poetry, in which the English stand almost upon an equal foot with the ancients; and it is that which we call Pindarique; introduced, but not perfected, by our famous Mr Cowley: and of this, Sir, you are certainly one of the greatest masters. You have the sublimity of sense as well as sound, and know how far the boldness of a poet may lawfully extend. I could wish you would cultivate this kind of Ode; and reduce it either to the same measures which Pindar used, or give new measures of your own. For, as it is, it looks like a vast tract of land newly discovered; the soil is wonderfully fruitful, but unmanured; overstocked with inhabitants, but almost all savages, without laws, arts, arms, or policy.

I remember poor Nat. Lee, who was then upon the verge of madness, yet made a sober and a witty answer to a bad poet, who told him, "It was an easie thing to write like a madman:" "No," said he, "it is very difficult to write like a madman, but it is a very easie matter to write like a fool." Otway and he are safe by death from all attacks, but we poor poets militant (to use Mr Cowley's expression) are at the mercy of wretched scribblers: and when they cannot fasten upon our verses, they fall upon our morals, our principles of state, and religion. For my principles of religion, I will not justifie them to you: I know yours are far different. For the same reason, I shall say nothing of my

* This lesson was thrown away upon poor Dennis, who, by his rash and riotous attacks upon Pope, afterwards procured an immortality of a kind very different from that to which he aspired.

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principles of state. I believe you in yours follow the dictates of your reason, as I in mine do those of my conscience. If I thought myself in an errour, I would retract it. I am sure that I suffer for them; and Milton makes even the Devil say, that no creature is in love with pain. For my morals betwixt man and man, I am not to be my own judge. I appeal to the world, if I have deceived or defrauded any man: and for my private conversation, they who see me every day can be the best witnesses, whether or no it be blameless and inoffensive. Hitherto I have no reason to complain that men of either party shun my company. I have never been an impudent beggar at the doors of noblemen: my visits have indeed been too rare to be unacceptable; and but just enough to testifie my gratitude for their bounty, which I have frequently received, but always unasked, as themselves will witness.

I have written more than I needed to you on this subject; for I dare say you justifie me to yourself. As for that which I first intended for the principal subject of this letter, which is my friend's passion and his design of marriage, on better consideration I have changed my mind; for having had the honour to see my dear friend Wycherly's letter to him on that occasion, I find nothing to be added or amended. But as well as I love Mr Wycherly, I confess I love myself so well, that I will not shew how much I am inferiour to him in wit and judgment, by undertaking any thing after him. There is Moses and the Prophets in his council. Jupiter and Juno, as the poets tell us, made Tiresias their umpire in a certain merry dispute, which fell out in heaven betwixt them. Tiresias, you know, had been of both sexes, and therefore was a proper

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judge; our friend Mr Wycherly is full as competent an arbitrator; he has been a bachelor, and marryed man, and is now a widower. Virgil says of Ceneus,

——Nunc vir, nunc fœmina, Ceneus,
Rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram.

Yet I suppose he will not give any large commendations to his middle state: nor, as the sailer said, will be fond after a shipwrack to put to sea again.* If my friend will adventure after this, I can but wish him a good wind, as being his, and,

My dear Mr Dennis,
Your most affectionate
and most faithful Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XII.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

The copy money for translating the Æneid was fifty pounds for each Book. The rising of the second subscription seems to allude to the practice of fixing a day, after which no subscriptions were to be received except on payment of an advanced price. The first subscribers to Dryden's Virgil paid five guineas; a plate was dedicated to each of them, and ornamented with his arms. A second class paid two guineas only, and were not so honoured. In the subsequent letters there occur several allusions to these arrangements, and to the transference of names from the higher to the lower class.

Wednesday morning.

MR TONSON, [Probably written in April 1695.]

IT is now three dayes since I have ended the fourth Eneid; and I am this morning beginning to

* Dryden's evil opinion of the state of matrimony, never fails to glance forth upon such occasions as the present.

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transcribe it, as you may do afterwards; for I am willing some few of my friends may see it, and shall give leave to you, to shew your transcription to some others, whose names I will tell you. The paying Ned Sheldon the fifty pounds put me upon this speed; but I intend not so much to overtoil myself, after the sixth book is ended. If the second subscriptions rise, I will take so much the more time, because the profit will incourage me the more; if not, I must make the more haste; yet always with as much care as I am able. But however, I will not fail in my paines of translating the sixth Eneid with the same exactness as I have performed the fourth: because that book is my greatest favourite. You know money is now very scrupulously receiv'd: in the last which you did me the favour to change for my wife, besides the clip'd money, there were at least forty shillings brass. You may, if you please, come to me at the Coffee-house this afternoon, or at farthest to morrow, that we may take care together, where and when I may receive the fifty pounds and the guinneys; which must be some time this week.

I am your servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

I have written to my Lord Lawderdail, for his decorations.*

LETTER XIII.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, Saturday, June the 8th. [f. 1695.]

'Tis now high time for me to think of my second subscriptions; for the more time I have for collect-

* One of the subscribers of the higher class. The decorations were probably his armorial bearings.

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ing them, the larger they are like to be. I have now been idle just a fortnight; and therefore might have called sooner on you, for the remainder of the first subscriptions. And besides, Mr Aston will be goeing into Cheshire a week hence, who is my onely help, and to whom you are onely beholding for makeing the bargain betwixt us, which is so much to my loss; but I repent nothing of it that is passed, but that I do not find myself capable of translating so great an author, and therefore feare to lose my own credit, and to hazard your profit, which it wou'd grieve me if you should loose, by your too good opinion of my abilities. I expected to have heard of you this week, according to the intimation you gave me of it; but that failing, I must defer it no longer than till the ensueing week, because Mr Aston will afterwards be gone, if not sooner.

Be pleased to send me word what day will be most convenient to you; and be ready with the price of paper, and of the books. No matter for any dinner; for that is a charge to you, and I care not for it.* Mr Congreve may be with us, as a common friend; for as you know him for yours, I make not the least doubt, but he is much more mine; send an immediate answer, and you shall find me ready to do all things w^{ch} become

Your Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

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* It was an ancient British custom, and prevailed in Scotland within these forty years, to finish all bargains, contracts, and even consultations, at a tavern, that the parties might not, according to the ancient Caledonian phrase, part *dry-lipp'd*. The custom between authors and booksellers seems to have been universal; and the reader may recollect, that the supposed poisoning of the celebrated Edmund Curl took place at a meeting of this kind.

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LETTER XIV.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MY GOOD FRIEND, [Wednesday the 13th of 7 ber. f.1695.]

THIS is onely to acquaint you, that I have taken my place in the Oundel coach for Tuesday next; and hope to be at London on Wednesday night. I had not confidence enough to hope Mr Southern and Mr Congreve would have given me the favour of their company for the last foure miles; but since they will be so kind to a friend of theirs, who so truely loves both them and you, I will please myself with expecting it, if the weather be not so bad as to hinder them.

I assure you I lay up your last kindnesses to me in my heart; and the less I say of them, I charge them to account so much the more; being very sensible that I have not hitherto deserved them. Having been obliged to sit up all last night almost out of civility to strangers, who were benighted, and to resign my bed to them, I am sleepy all this day; and if I had not taken a very lusty pike that day, they must have gone supperless to bed, foure ladyes and two gentlemen; for Mr Dudley and I were alone, with but one man and no mayd in the house.—This time I cannot write to my wife; do me the favour to let her know I received her letter, am well, and hope to be with her on Wednesday next, at night. No more but that

I am very much
Your Friend and Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

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LETTER XV.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, October the 29th. [f. 1695.]

SOME kind of intercourse must be carryed on betwixt us, while I am translating Virgil. Therefore I give you notice that I have done the seaventh Eneid in the country ;* and intend some few days hence, to go upon the eight: when that is finished, I expect fifty pounds in good silver; not such as I have had formerly. I am not obliged to take gold,† neither will I; nor stay for it beyond four-and-twenty houres after it is due. I thank you for the civility of your last letter in the country; but the thirty shillings upon every book remains with me. You always intended I should get nothing by the second subscriptions, as I found from first to last. And your promise to Mr Congreve, that you had found a way for my benefit, which was an encouragement to my paines, came at last, for me to desire Sir Godfrey Kneller and Mr Closterman to gather for me. I then told Mr Congreve, that I knew you too well to believe you meant me any kindness: and he promised me to believe accordingly of you, if you did not. But this is past; and you shall have your bargain, if I live and have my health. You may send me word what you have done in my business with the Earl of Derby: and I must have a place for the Duke of Devonshire. Some of your friends will be glad

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* At Burleigh, the seat of John, the fifth Earl of Essex.

† Both the gold and silver coin were at this time much depreciated; and remained in a fluctuating state till a new coinage took place.

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to take back their three guinneys. The Countess of Macclesfield gave her money to Will Plowden before Christmas; but he remembred it not, and payd it not in. Mr Aston tells me, my Lord Derby expects but one book. I find, my Lord Chesterfield and my Lord Petre are both left out; but my Lady Macclesfield must have a place, if I can possibly: and Will Plowden shall pay you in three guinneys if I can obtain so much favour from you.* I desire neither excuses nor reasons from you: for I am but too well satisfyed already. The Notes and Prefaces shall be short; because you shall get the more by saving paper.†

JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XVI.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, Friday night. [f. Dec. 1695.]

MEETING Sir Robert Howard at the playhouse this morning, and asking him how he lik'd my seaventh Eneid, he told me you had not brought it. He goes out of town to-morrow, being Satturday, after dinner. I desire you not to fail of carrying my manuscript for him to read in the country; and desire him to bring it up with him, when he

* From inspecting the plates of Dryden's Virgil, it appears, that the Earl of Derby had one inscribed to him, as had Lord Chesterfield. But this wrathful letter made no farther impression on the mercantile obstinacy of Tonson; and neither the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Petre, nor Lady Macclesfield, obtained the place among the first subscribers, which Dryden so peremptorily demands for them.

† This seems to be a bitter jibe at Jacob's parsimony.

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comes next to town. I doubt you have not yet been with my Lord Chesterfield, and am in pain about it. Yours,

JOHN DRYDEN.

When you have leysure, I shou'd be glad to see how Mr Congreve and you have worded my propositions for Virgil.* When my sonne's play† is acted, I intend to translate again, if my health continue. Some time next week let me heare from you concerning the propositions.

LETTER XVII.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

SIR, Friday forenoon. [f. Feb 1695–6.]

I RECEIV'D your letter very kindly,‡ because indeed I expected none; but thought you as very a tradesman as Bentley,‖ who has cursed our Virgil so heartily. I shall loose enough by your bill upon Mr Knight;§ for after having taken it all in silver, and not in half-crowns neither, but shillings and sixpences, none of the money will go; for which reason I have sent it all back again, and as the less loss will receive it in guinneys at 29 shil-

* Perhaps the proposals for the second subscription. See Letter xi.

† "The Husband his own Cuckold," written by our author's second son, John, and published in July 1696.

‡ Tonson's answer to the foregoing letter, seems to have been pacific and apologetical, yet peremptory as to his terms.

‖ Richard Bentley, a bookseller and printer, who lived in Russel Street, Covent Garden.

§ A banker or goldsmith, afterwards notorious for his share in the South Sea scheme, to which Company he was cashier.

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lings each. 'Tis troublesome to be a looser, but it was my own fault to accept it this way, which I did to avoyd more trouble.

I am not sorry that you will not allow any thing towards the notes; for to make them good, would have cost me half a yeare's time at least. Those I write shall be only marginall, to help the unlearned, who understand not the poeticall fables. The prefaces, as I intend them, will be somewhat more learned. It wou'd require seaven yeares to translate Virgil exactly. But I promise you once more to do my best in the four remaining books, as I have hitherto done in the foregoing.—Upon triall I find all of your trade are sharpers, and you not more than others; therefore I have not wholly left you. Mr Aston does not blame you for getting as good a bargain as you cou'd, though I cou'd have gott an hundred pounds more; and you might have spared almost all your trouble if you had thought fit to publish the proposalls for the first subscriptions; for I have guynneas offered me every day, if there had been room; I believe, modestly speaking, I have refused already 25. I mislike nothing in your letter therefore, but onely your upbraiding me with the publique encouragement, and my own reputation concerned in the notes; when I assure you I cou'd not make them to my mind in less than half a year's time. Get the first half of Virgil transcribed as soon as possibly you can, that I may put the notes to it; and you may have the other four books which lye ready for you when you bring the former; that the press may stay as little as possibly it can. My Lord Chesterfield has been to visite me, but I durst say nothing of Virgil to him, for feare there should be no void place for him; if there be, let me know; and tell me whether you have made room for the Duke of

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Devonshire. Haveing no silver by me, I desire my Lord Derby's money, deducting your own. And let it be good, if you desire to oblige me, who am not your enemy, and may be your friend,

JOHN DRYDEN.

Let me heare from you as speedily as you can.

LETTER XVIII.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

May 26th, [1696.]

SEND word, if you please, Sir, what is the most you will give for my sonn's play, that I may take the fairest chapman, as I am bound to do for his benefit; and if you have any silver which will go, my wife will be glad of it. I lost thirty shillings or more by the last payment of fifty pounds, w^ch^ you made at Mr Knights.

Yours,

JOHN DRYDEN.

Sir Ro: Howard* writt me word, that if I cou'd make any advantage by being paid in clipp'd money, he would change it in the Exchequer.

* Sir Robert Howard had been appointed auditor of the Exchequer in 1673, and held that office till his death.

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LETTER XIX.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, Thursday Morning, [f. Aug. 1696.]

I HAD yesterday morning two watches sent me by Mr Tompion,* which I am to send my sonnes this week.† I cou'd not persuade him to take gold at any rate: but he will take a goldsmiths bill for two and twenty pounds, which is their price. I desire you wou'd give him such a bill, and abate it out of the next fifty pounds which you are to pay me when Virgil is finish'd. Ten Eneids are finish'd, and the ninth and tenth written out in my own hand. You may have them with the eight, which is in a foul copy, when you please to call for them, and to bring those which are transcrib'd. Mr Tompion's man will be with me at four o'clock in the afternoon, and bring the watches, and must be paid at sight. I desire you therefore to procure a goldsmiths bill, and let me have it before that houre, and send an answer by my boy.

Yours,
JOHN DRYDEN.

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* The celebrated watchmaker, who was originally a jacksmith. MALONE.

† They were at this time at Rome.

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LETTER XX.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

Wednesday afternoon.

MR TONSON, From the Coffee-house. Nov. 25th.

I HAVE the remainder of my Northamptonshyre rents come up this weeke, and desire the favour of you to receive them for me, from the carrier of Tocester, who lodges at the Castle in Smithfield. I suppose it is the same man from whom you lately receiv'd them for my wife. Any time before ten o'clock to-morrow morning will serve the turne. If I were not deeply ingaged in my studyes, which will be finish'd in a day or two, I would not put you to this trouble. I have inclos'd my tenant's letter to me, for you to shew the carrier, and to testify the summ, which is sixteen pounds and about tenn shillings; which the letter sets down. Pray, Sir, give in an acquittance for so much receiv'd, as I suppose you did last time.

I am,

Your very faithful Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XXI.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

SIR, [c. Jan. 1696-7.]

ACCORDING to my promise, I have sent you all that is properly yours of my translation. I desire,

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as you offer'd, that it should be transcrib'd in a legible hand, and then sent back to me for the last review. As for some notes on the margins, they are not every where, and when they are, are imperfect; so that you ought not to transcribe them, till I make them compleat. I feare you can scarcely make any thing of my foul copy; but it is the best I have. You see, my hand fails me, and therefore I write so short a letter. What I wrote yesterday was too sharp; but I doubt it is all true. Your boy's coming upon so unseasonable a visit, as if you were frighted for yourself, discomposed me.

Transcribe on very large paper, and leave a very large margin.

Send your boy for the foul copies, and he shall have them; for it will not satisfy me to send them by my own servant.

I cannot yet find the first sheet of the first Eneid. If it be lost, I will translate it over againe: but perhaps it may be amongst the loose papers. The fourth and ninth Eclogues, which I have sent, are corrected in my wife's printed Miscellany.*

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* The Eclogues of Virgil had been published in the first Miscellany. Dryden probably corrected them with a pen in Lady Elizabeth's copy of the printed book, and sent it to the bookseller as what is technically called *copy*.

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LETTER XXII.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, Tuesday Morning, July the 6th, 1697.

I DESIRE you wou'd let Mr Pate* know, I can print no more names of his subscribers than I have money for, before I print their names. He has my acknowledgment of ten guineas receiv'd from him; and, as I told you, I owe him for above three yards of fine cloath: let him reckon for it; and then there will remain the rest for me, out of the ten more names w^ch^ he has given in. If he has not money by him, let him blott out as many of his names as he thinks good; and print onely those for which he pays or strikes off, in adjusting the accounts be-

---

* This person, in the last age, was frequently called "the learned tradesman." "Sir Andrew Fountaine (says Swift in his *Journal*, October 6, 1710,) came this morning, and caught me writing in bed. I went into the city with him, and we dined at the Chop-house, with Will Pate, *the learned woollen-draper*; then we sauntered at china shops and booksellers; went to the tavern, and drank two pints of white wine," &c. Mr William Pate was educated at Trinity Hall in Cambridge, where he took the degree of B. C. L. He died in 1746, and was buried at Lee, in Kent.

Mr Malone, who mentions these particulars, transcribes Mr Pate's epitaph, the moral of which is:—

Nervos atque artus esse sapientiæ,
Non temere credere.

It would seem, from Dryden's letter, that this learned tradesman understood the mercantile, as well as the literary use of the apothegm.

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twixt me and him. This is so reasonab[le] sides, that he cannot refuse it; but I w[ould] things ended now, because I am to deal with [a] draper, who is of my own perswasion,* and to whom I have promis'd my custome.

Yours,
JOHN DRYDEN.

I have sent to my tailour, and he sends me word, that I had three yards and half elle of cloath from Mr Pate: I desire he would make his price, and deduct so much as it comes to, and make even for the rest with ready money; as also that he would send word what the name was, for whom Sam Atkins left him to make account for.

LETTER XXIII.

TO HIS SONS AT ROME.

DEAR SONS, Sept. the 3d. our Style, [1697.]

BEING now at Sir William Bowyer's,† in the country, I cannot write at large, because I find my self somewhat indisposed with a cold, and am thick of hearing, rather worse than I was in town. I am glad to find by your letter of July 26th, your style,

* A Roman Catholic.

† At Denham Court, in Buckinghamshire. Sir William Bowyer married a kinswoman of Lady Elizabeth Dryden; Frances, daughter of Charles, Lord Cranbourne, eldest son of William, the second Earl of Salisbury.—MALONE.

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that you are both in health, but wonder you should think me so negligent as to forget to give you an account of the ship in which your parcel is to come. I have written to you two or three letters concerning it, which I have sent by safe hands, as I told you; and doubt not but you have them before this can arrive to you. Being out of town, I have forgotten the ship's name, which your mother will enquire, and put it into her letter, which is joined with mine. But the master's name I remember; he is called Mr Ralph Thorp; the ship is bound to Leghorn, consigned to Mr Peter and Mr Tho. Ball, merchants. I am of your opinion, that, by Tonson's means, almost all our letters have miscarried for this last year.* But, however, he has missed of his design in the dedication, though he had prepared the book for it; † for, in every figure of Æneas, he has caused him to be drawn like King William, with a hooked nose.‡

---

* This seems to imply a suspicion, though an odd one, that Jacob, being bent to convert Dryden to his own views of politics, intercepted his sons' letters from Rome, as proceeding from an interest hostile to his views. (See p. 140.) His earnest wish was, that the Æneid should be inscribed to King William.

† The translation of Virgil.

‡ In MS. Harl. p. 35, in the Museum, are the following verses, occasioned by this circumstance:

"To be published in the next edition of Dryden's Virgil.

'Old Jacob, by deep judgment sway'd,
To please the wise beholders,
Has placed old Nassau's hook-nosed head
On poor Æneas' shoulders.

'To make the parallel hold tack,
Methinks there's little lacking;
One took his father pick-a-pack,
And t'other sent his packing.'

In a copy I have seen of this epigram, "poor" Æneas is improved into "young" Æneas.

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After my return to town, I intend to alter a play of Sir Robert Howard's, written long since, and lately put by him into my hands: 'tis called the "Conquest of China by the Tartars."* It will cost me six weeks study, with the probable benefit of an hundred pounds. In the mean time, I am writing a song for St Cecilia's Feast, who, you know, is the patroness of music. This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the stewards of the feast, who came in a body to me to desire that kindness, one of them being Mr Bridgman, whose parents are your mother's friends. I hope to send you thirty guineas between Michaelmass and Christmass, of which I will give you an account when I come to town. I remember the counsel you give me in your letter; but dissembling, though lawful in some cases, is not my talent; yet, for your sake, I will struggle with the plain openness of my nature, and keep in my just resentments against that degenerate order.† In the mean time, I flatter not myself with any manner of hopes, but do my duty, and suffer for God's sake; being assured, beforehand, never to be rewarded, though the times should alter. Towards the latter end of this month, September, Charles will begin to recover his perfect health, according to his nativity, which, casting it myself, I am sure is true; and all things hitherto have happened accordingly to the very time that I predicted them. I hope, at the same time, to recover more health, according to my age. Remember me to poor Harry, whose prayers I earnestly desire. My Virgil succeeds in the world

---

* This Dryden never effected, nor was Howard's play ever printed.

† Probably the clergy of England.

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beyond its desert, or my expectation. You know, the profits might have been more; but neither my conscience nor my honour would suffer me to take them;* but I never can repent of my constancy, since I am thoroughly persuaded of the justice of the cause for which I suffer. It has pleased God to raise up many friends to me amongst my enemies, though they, who ought to have been my friends, are negligent of me. I am called to dinner, and cannot go on with this letter, which I desire you to excuse; and am

Your most affectionate father,
JOHN DRYDEN.

Superscribed,
Al illustrissimo Sig^re^.
Carlo Dryden,
Camariere d'Honore A. S. S.
Franca per Mantoua. In Roma.

To this Letter, Lady Elizabeth Dryden subjoined, on the same paper, the following Postscript:—

My dear sons, I sent your letter emediately to your father, after I had read it, as you will find by his. I have not room to say much, having writ former letters to you, datted the 27 of August, your father being then out of town; he writes me word —he is much at woon as to his health, and his defnese is not wosce, but much as he was when he

* This probably alludes to the proposition which appears to have been made to him, concerning the dedication of his Virgil to King William; for which a valuable pecuniary reward might have been expected. MALONE.

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was heare. He expresses a great desire to see my dear Charlles; and trully I see noe reason why you should not both come together, to be a comfort to woon another, and to us both, if the King of France includ Ingland in the peace;* for you doe but gust make shift to live wheare you are, and soe I hope you may doe heare; for I will leaf noe ston unturn'd to help my belov'd sonns. If I cane, I will send this letter by the same way it came;† that is, it was brought me from woon Mr Galoway, who corresponds with Rozie; I payd woon and sixpence for it, and do offer to pay him what he demandes, so that he would take ceare the [packet] might come safe to your handes. I long tell I heare my deare Charlles is better. I have only room to tell you the names of the merchantes your parcell went in; you are to demmand them of Mr Robert Ball and Thommas Ball in Lindovino in Livorno. You are not to pay any charges for the box, for the port of London. If the have demanded any of you, send word to me what it is; for otherwayes wee shall pay twice for them; and this Mr Walkeson telles me, with his service to you both. Farwell, my deare children: God Almighty keep you in his protection, for that is the wishes and prayers of your most affec: mother, that sends her blessinge to you all; not forgetting my sonn Harry, whose prayers I desire for a comfortable meetinge. I hope I may have some better thinges against you come, than what is sent you in that box; there being nothing considurabell but my deare Jackes play,

---

* The peace of Ryswick, which was proclaimed at London in the following month, October 19, 1697, O. S.

† She *means*, I suppose,—by the same way her son's letter came to her.

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who I desire in his next to me to give me a true account how my deare sonn Charlles is head dus; for I cane be at noe rest tell I heare he is better, or rather thourely well, which I dally pray for.*

LETTER XXIV.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, [f. Dec. 1697.]

I THANK you heartily for the sherry; it was, as you sayd, the best of the kind I ever dranke. I have found the catalogue you desire, of the subscribers' names you left with me; and have sent them to you inclosed. Remember, in the copy of verses for St Cecilia, to alter the name of *Lais*, which is twice there, for *Thais;* those two ladyes were contemporaryes, which causd that small mistake. I wish you coud tell me how to send my sonns our Virgil, which you gave me; and should be glad if you coud put me in a way of remitting thirty guineas to Rome, which I woud pay heer, for my sonns to have the vallue there, according as the ex-

* To account for the difference between the exquisite orthography of Lady Elizabeth's present epistle, and that to Dr Busby, Mr Malone suggests, that Dryden probably revised the latter before it was sent.

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change goes. Any time this fortnight will be soon enough to send the money: the book, I know, will require a longer space, because ships go not for Italy every day.

I am
Your humble servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

I hear Tom Brown is comeing out upon me.*

LETTER XXV.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, Wednesday. [6 Dec. 1697.]

I HAVE broken off my studies from the "Conquest of China,"† to review Virgil, and bestowed nine entire days upon him. You may have the printed copy you sent me to-morrow morning, if you will come for it yourself; for the printer is a beast, and understands nothing I can say to him of

* Tom Brown had, in the year of the Revolution, published "The Reasons of Mr Bayes changing his Religion;" and in 1690, a second Part, called the "Late Converts Exposed." What this small wit now had in hand is difficult to guess; none of his direct attacks against Dryden appear in his works: but his insignificant enmity survived Dryden, for he wrote a burlesque account of the poet's funeral in verse, and libelled his memory in prose, in his "Letters from the Dead to the Living."

† This labour he never resumed.

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correcting the press. Dr Chetwood* claims my promise of the Ode on St Cecilia's Day, which I desire you to send to him (according to the Parliament phrase) forthwith. My wife says you have broken your promise about the picture, and desires it speedily; the rest I will tell you when you come.

Yours,

JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XXVI.

TO MR JACOB TONSON.

MR TONSON, [f. Dec. 1697.]

You were no sooner gone, but I felt in my pocket, and found my Lady Chudleigh's† verses; which this afternoon I gave Mr Walsh to read in the coffee-house. His opinion is the same with mine, that they are better than any which are printed before the book: so thinks also Mr Wycherly. I have them by me; but do not send them till I heare from my Lord Clifford, whether my lady will put her name to them or not: therefore I desire they may be printed last of all the copyes,

* The Rev. Dr Knightly Chetwood, an intimate friend of our author.

† Mary Leigh, the wife of Sir George Chudleigh of Ashton, in the same county, Bart. She died in the year 1710. Her life is among those of Ballard's "Learned Ladies." The verses mentioned in the text are not prefixed to the "Virgil," but printed in Lady Chudleigh's Poems.

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and of all the book. I have also written this day to Mr Chetwood, and let him know, that the book is immediately goeing to the press again. My opinion is, that the printer shou'd begin with the first Pastoral, and print on to the end of the Georgiques; or farther, if occasion be, till Dr Chetwood corrects his preface,* which he writes me word is printed very false. You cannot take too great care of the printing this edition exactly after my amendments; for a fault of that nature will disoblige me eternally.

I am glad to heare from all hands, that my Ode† is esteem'd the best of all my poetry, by all the town: I thought so myself when I writ it; but, being old, I mistrusted my own judgment. I hope it has done you service, and will do more. You told me not, but the town says you are printing Ovid *de Arte Amandi.* I know my translation‡ is very uncorrect; but at the same time I know, nobody else can do it better, with all their paines. If there be any loose papers left in the Virgil I gave you this morning, look for them, and send them back by my man: I miss not any yet; but 'tis possible some may be left, because I gave you the book in a hurry. I vow to God, if Everingham takes not care of this impression, he shall never print any thing of mine heerafter: for I will write on, since I find I can.

I desire you to make sure of the three pounds of snuff, the same of which I had one pound from you. When you send it any morning, I will pay for it all

---

* The preface to the "Pastorals."

† The "Ode for St Cecilia's Day." It is pleasing to be assured, that the best of English lyrics was received with due honour on its first appearance.

‡ Our author only translated the First Book. See Vol. XII. p. 231.

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together. But this is not the business of this letter.—When you were heer, I intended to have sent an answer to poor Charles his letter; but I had not then the letter which my chirurgeon promis'd me, of his advice, to prevent a rupture, which he fears.* Now I have the surgeon's answer, which I have inclosed in my letter to my sonn. This is a business of the greatest consequence in the world; for you know how I love Charles: and therefore I write to you with all the earnestness of a father, that you will procure Mr Francia† to inclose it in his packet this week: for a week lost may be my sonn's ruine; whom I intend to send for next summer, without his brother, as I have written him word: and if it please God that I must dye of over-study, I cannot spend my life better, than in saving his. I vallue not any price for a double letter; let me know it, and it shall be payd; for I dare not trust it by the post: being satisfy'd by experience, that Ferrand will do by this, as he did by two letters which I sent my sonns, about my dedicating to the king;‡ of which they received neither. If you cannot go yourself, then send a note to Signior Francia, as earnestly as you can write it, to beg that it may go this day, I meane Friday. I need not tell you, how much herein you will oblige

Your friend and servant,

J. D.

---

* His son Charles had probably been much hurt by a dangerous fall at Rome; probably that mentioned by Mrs Thomas, in her exaggerated account of his accident at the Vatican. In a former letter, his mother enquires particularly about his *head*.

† Probably the Genoese resident at that time.

‡ See page 132.

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LETTER XXVII.

TO MRS STEWARD.*

MADAM, Saturday, Octob. 1st—98.

You have done me the honour to invite so often, that it would look like want of respect to refuse it any longer. How can you be so good to an old decrepid man, who can entertain you with no dis-

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* Of Mrs Steward Mr Malone gives the following account:—"This lady, who was not less distinguished for her talents and accomplishments than her beauty and virtues, having been both a painter and a poetess, was the eldest surviving daughter of John Creed of Oundle, Esq. (secretary to Charles II. for the affairs of Tangier,) by Elizabeth Pickering, his wife, who was the only daughter of Sir Gilbert Pickering, Baronet, our author's cousin-german. Her eldest son, Richard Creed, as we have seen, fell in the battle of Blenheim, and was honoured with a monument in Westminster Abbey. Her eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was born in the year 1672, and, in 1692, married Elmes Steward of Cotterstock, in the county of Northampton, Esq.; where they principally resided. By this gentleman, who is said to have preferred field-sports to any productions of the Muses, she had three children; Elizabeth, who became the wife of Thomas Gwillim, Esq. of Old Court, in the parish of Whitchurch, near Ross in Herefordshire; Anne, who died unmarried; and Jemima, who married Elmes Spinckes of Aldwinckle, Esq. Mrs Steward, who survived her husband above thirty years, in the latter part of her life became blind, in which melancholy state she died in the house of her son-in-law Mr Gwillim, at the age of seventy-one, Jan. 17, 1742-3; and a monument was erected to her memory in the church of Whitchurch. The hall of Cotterstock-house was painted in fresco by her, in a very masterly style, and she drew several portraits of her friends in Northamptonshire. Her own portrait, painted by herself, is in the possession of her kinswoman, Mrs Ord, of Queen Anne Street."

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cours which is worthy of your good sense, and who can onely be a trouble to you in all the time he stays at Cotterstock. Yet I will obey your commands as far as possibly I can, and give you the inconvenience you are pleas'd to desire; at least for the few days which I can spare from other necessary business, which requires me at Tichmarsh. Therefore, if you please to send your coach on Tuesday next by eleven o'clock in the morning, I hope to wait on you before dinner. There is onely one more trouble, which I am almost ashamed to name. I am obliged to visit my cousin, Dryden of Chesterton,* some time next week, who is nine miles from hence, and only five from you. If it be with your convenience to spare me your coach thether for a day, the rest of my time till Monday is at your service; and I am sorry for my own sake it cannot be any longer this year, because I have some visits after my return hether, which I cannot avoyd. But if it please God to give me life and health, I may give you occasion another time to repent of your kindness, by makeing you weary of my company. My sonn kisses your hand. Be pleas'd to give his humble service to my cousin Steward, and mine, who am,

Madam,

Your most obedient oblig'd servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

For my Honour'd Cousine,
Mrs Steward, att Cotterstock,
These.

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* See Vol. XI. p. 71.

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LETTER XXVIII.

TO ELMES STEWARD, ESQ.

MY HONOUR'D COUSIN, [Probably, Nov. 20, 1698.]

I shou'd have received your letter with too much satisfaction, if it had not been allay'd with the bad news of my cousin your wife's indisposition; which yet I hope will not continue. I am sure, if care and love will contribute to her health, she will want neither from so tender a husband as you are: and indeed you are both worthy of each other. You have been pleased, each of you, to be kind to my sonn* and me, your poor relations, without any merit on our side, unless you will let our gratitude pass for our desert. And now you are pleas'd to invite another trouble on your self, which our bad company may possibly draw upon you next year, if I have life and health to come into Northamptonshire; and that you will please not to make so much a stranger of me another time.—I intend my wife shall tast the plover you did me the favour to send me. If either your lady or you shall at any time honour me with a letter, my house is in Gerard-street, the fifth door on the left hand, comeing from Newport-street. I pray God I may hear better news of both your healths, and of my good cousin Creed's,† and my cousin Dorothy,‡ than I

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* His eldest son Charles, who returned from Italy to England about the middle of the year 1698.

† Mrs Steward's father, Mr John Creed.

‡ Miss, or, in the language of that day, *Mistress* Dorothy Creed, second daughter of John Creed, Esq.

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have had while I was in this country. I shall languish till you send me word; and I assure you I write this without poetry, who am, from the bottome of my heart,

My honour'd cousin's most obliged
Humble servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

My sonn and I kiss my cousin Steward's hand; and give our service to your sister, and pretty Miss Betty.

For my Honour'd Cousin,
Elmes Steward, Esq. Att Cotterstock.

LETTER XXIX.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Nov. 23d, 1698.

To take acknowledgments of favours for favours done you, is onely yours. I am always on the receiving hand; and you, who have been pleas'd to be troubled so long with my bad company, in stead of forgiveing, which is all I could expect, will turn it to a kindness on my side. If your house be often so molested, you will have reason to be weary of it, before the ending of the year: and wish Cotterstock were planted in a desart, an hundred miles off from any poet.—After I had lost the happiness of your company, I could expect no other than the loss of my health, which followed, according to the proverb, that misfortunes seldome come alone. I

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had no woman to visite* but the parson's wife; and she, who was intended by nature as a help meet for a deaf husband, was somewhat of the loudest for my conversation; and for other things, I will say no more then that she is just your contrary, and an epitome of her own country. My journey to London was yet more unpleasant than my abode at Tichmarsh; for the coach was crowded up with an old woman fatter than any of my hostesses on the rode. Her weight made the horses travel very heavily; but, to give them a breathing time, she would often stop us, and plead some necessity of nature, and tell us, we were all flesh and blood: but she did this so frequently, that at last we conspir'd against her; and that she might not be inconvenienc'd by staying in the coach, turn'd her out in a very dirty place, where she was to wade up to the ankles, before she cou'd reach the next hedge. When I was ridd of her, I came sick home, and kept my house for three weeks together; but, by advice of my doctour, takeing twice the bitter draught, with sena in it, and looseing at least twelve ounces of blood, by cupping on my neck, I am just well enough to go abroad in the afternoon; but am much afflicted that I have you a companion of my sickness: though I 'scap'd with one cold fit of an ague, and yours, I feare, is an intermitting feavour. Since I heard nothing of your father, whom I left ill, I hope he is recover'd of his real sickness, and that your sister is well of hers, which was onely in imagination. My wife and sonn return you

* At Tichmarsh, after his return from Cotterstock.

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their most humble service, and I give mine to my cousin Steward.—Madam,

Your most obliged and
most obedient servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

[*The superscription has not been preserved.*]

LETTER XXX.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Dec. 12th.—98.

ALL my letters being nothing but acknowledgements of your favours to me, 'tis no wonder if they are all alike: for they can but express the same thing, I being eternally the receiver, and you the giver. I wish it were in my power to turn the skale on the other hand, that I might see how you, who have so excellent a wit, cou'd thank on your side. Not to name my selfe or my wife, my sonn Charles is the great commender of your last receiv'd present; who being of late somewhat indispos'd, uses to send for some of the same sort, which we call heer marrow-puddings, for his suppers; but the tast of yours has so spoyl'd his markets heer, that there is not the least comparison betwixt them. You are not of an age to be a Sybill, and yet I think you are a prophetess; for the direction on your basket was for him; and he is likely to enjoy the greatest part of them: for I always think the young are more worthy than the old; especially since you are one of the former sort, and that he mends upon your medicine.—I am very glad to hear my cousin, your father, is comeing or come to

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town; perhaps this ayr may be as beneficiall to him as it has been to me: but you tell me nothing of your own health, and I fear Cotterstock is too agueish for this season.—My wife and sonn give you their most humble thanks and service; as I do mine to my cousin Steward; and am, Madam,

Your most oblig'd obedient servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Steward,
Att Cotterstock, near Oundle,
in the county of Northampton, These.
To be left with the Postmaster of Oundle.

LETTER XXXI.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Candlemas-Day, 1698 [-9.]

OLD men are not so insensible of beauty, as it may be, you young ladies think. For my own part, I must needs acknowledge, that your fair eyes had made me your slave before I received your fine presents. Your letter puts me out of doubt that they have lost nothing of their lustre, because it was written with your own hand; and not heareing of a feavour or an ague, I will please my self with the thoughts that they have wholly left you. I wou'd also flatter my self with the hopes of waiting on you at Cotterstock some time next summer; but my want of health may perhaps hinder me. But if I am well enough to travell as farr northward as Northamptonshyre, you are sure of a guest, who has been too well us'd not to trouble you again.

My sonn, of whom you have done me the favour

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to enquire, meids of his indisposition very slowly; the ayr of England not agreeing with him hether-to so well as that of Italy. The Bath is propos'd by the doctours, both to him and me: but we have not yet resolved absolutely on that journey; for that city is so closs and so ill situated, that perhaps the ayr may do us more harm than the waters can do us good: for which reason we intend to try them heer first; and, if we find not the good effect which is promis'd of them, we will save our selves the pains of goeing thether. In the mean time, betwixt my intervalls of physique, and other remedies which I am useing for my gravel, I am still drudgeing on: always a poet, and never a good one. I pass my time sometimes with Ovid, and sometimes with our old English poet Chaucer; translateing such stories as best please my fancy; and intend, besides them, to add somewhat of my own; so that it is not impossible, but ere the summer be pass'd, I may come down to you with a volume in my hand, like a dog out of the water, with a duck in his mouth. As for the rarities you promise, if beggars might be choosers, a part of a chine of honest bacon wou'd please my appetite more than all the marrow puddings; for I like them better plain, having a very vulgar stomach. My wife, and your cousin, Charles, give you their most humble service, and thanks for your remembrance of them. I present my own to my worthy cousin, your husband, and am, with all respect,

Madam,

Your most obliged servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

For

Mrs Stewart, att Cotterstock
near Oundle, in Northamptonshire,
These.

To be left with the Postmaster of Oundle.

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LETTER XXXII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Thursday, Feb. 9th.—98 [-9.]

For this time I must follow a bad example, and send you a shorter letter than your short one: you were hinder'd by dancers, and I am forc'd to dance attendance all this afternoon after a troublesome business, so soon as I have written this, and seal'd it. Onely I can assure you, that your father and mother, and all your relations, are in health, or were yesterday, when I sent to enquire of their welfare. On Tuesday night we had a violent wind, which blew down three of my chimneys, and dismantled all one side of my house, by throwing down the tiles. My neighbours, and indeed all the town, suffer'd more or less; and some were kill'd. The great trees in St James's Park are many of them torn up from the roots; as they were before Oliver Cromwell's death,* and the late queen's: but your father had no damage. I sent my man for the present you designed me; but he return'd empty-handed; for there was no such man as *Carter*, a carrier, inning at the Bear and Ragged Staff

* See Vol. IX. p. 38. Note XVIII. Our author commemorated this circumstance in his "Elegy on the Protector;"—

——— The isle when her protecting genius went,
Upon his obsequies loud sighs conferr'd.

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in Smithfield, nor any one there ever heard of such a person; by which I ghess that some body has deceiv'd you with a counterfeited name. Yet my obligations are the same; and the favour shall be always own'd by,

Madam,
Your most humble servant,
and kinsman,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stewart,
Att Cotterstocke neare Oundle, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, March the 4th, 1698 [-9.]

I HAVE reason to be pleas'd with writeing to you, because you are daily giveing me occasions to be pleas'd. The present which you made me this week, I have receiv'd; and it will be part of the treat I am to make to three of my friends about Tuesday next: my cousin Driden, of Chesterton, having been also pleas'd to add to it a turkey hen with eggs, and a good young goose; besides a very kind letter, and the news of his own good health, which I value more than all the rest; he being so noble a benefactor to a poor and so undeserving a kinsman, and one of another persuasion in matters of religion. Your enquiry of his welfare, and sending also mine, have at once oblig'd both him and me. I hope my good cousin Stewart will often visite

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him, especially before hunting goes out,* to be a comfort to him in his sorrow for the loss of his deare brother,† who was a most extraordinary well-natur'd man, and much my friend. Exercise, I know, is my cousin Driden's life, and the oftner he goes out will be the better for his health. We poor Catholics daily expect a most severe proclamation to come out against us;‡ and at the same time are satisfyed that the king is very unwilling to persecute us, considering us to be but an handfull, and those disarmed; but the archbishop of Canterbury is our heavy enemy, and heavy indeed he is in all respects.§

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* Driden, or Chesterton, who, as appears from our author's Epistle addressed to him, was a keen sportsman.

† Probably Bevil Driden.

‡ This severe proclamation appeared in the London Gazette, No. 3476, Monday, March 6, 1698-9. It enjoined all Popish recusants to remove to their respective places of abode; or if they had none, to the dwellings of their fathers or mothers; and not to remove five miles from thence: and it charged the lord mayor of London, and all other justices of peace, to put the statute 1st William and Mary, c. 9. for amoving Papists ten miles from London and Westminster, into execution, by tendering them the declaration therein mentioned; and also another act of William and Mary, for disarming Papists.

§ Dr Thomas Tennison, who succeeded to the see of Canterbury in 1694, on the death of Tillotson. He is thus sarcastically described by William Shippen, in "Faction Displayed," a poem written a few years afterwards:

> "A pause ensued, till Patriarcho's grace
> Was pleased to rear his huge unwieldy mass;
> A mass unanimated with a soul,
> Or else he'd ne'er be made so vile a tool:
> He'd ne'er his apostolic charge profane,
> And atheists' and fanaticks' cause maintain.
> At length, as from the hollow of an oak,
> The bulky Primate yawn'd, and silence broke:
> I much approve," &c.

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This day was played a revived comedy of Mr Congreve's, called, "The Double Dealer," which was never very takeing. In the play-bill was printed—"Written by Mr Congreve; with severall expressions omitted." What kind of expressions those were, you may easily ghess, if you have seen the Monday's Gazette, wherein is the king's order for the reformation of the stage:* but the printing an author's name in a play-bill is a new manner of pro-

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So also Edmund Smith, in his elegant ode, *Charlettus Percivallo suo:*

"*Scribe securus, quid agit Senatus,*
Quid caput stertit grave Lambethanum,
Quid comes Guilford, quid habent novorum
Dawksque Dyerque."—MALONE.

* The London Gazette, No. 3474, Monday, Feb. 27, 1698-9, contains the order alluded to:

"His majesty has been pleased to command, that the following order should be sent to both Playhouses;

"His majesty being informed, that, notwithstanding an order made the 5th of June, 1697, by the Earl of Sunderland, then lord chamberlain of his majesty's household, to prevent the profaneness and immorality of the stage, several plays have lately been acted, containing expressions contrary to religion and good manners: And whereas the master of the revels has represented, that, in contempt of the said order, the actors do often neglect to leave out such profane and indecent expressions as he has thought proper to be omitted: These are therefore to signify his majesties pleasure, that you do not hereafter presume to act any thing in any play, contrary to religion and good manners, as you shall answer it at your utmost peril. Given under my hand this 18th of February, 1698, in the eleventh year of his majesties reign.

"PERE BERTIE.

"An order has been likewise sent, by his majesties command, to the master of the revels, not to license any plays containing expressions contrary to religion and good manners; and to give notice to the lord chamberlain of his majesties houshold, or, in his absence, to the vice-chamberlain, if the players presume to act any thing which he has struck out."

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ceeding, at least in England. When any papers of verses in manuscript, which are worth your reading, come abroad, you shall be sure of them; because, being a poetess yourself, you like those entertainments. I am still drudging at a book of Miscellanyes,* which I hope will be well enough; if otherwise, threescore and seven may be pardon'd.—Charles is not yet so well recover'd as I wish him; but I may say, without vanity, that his virtue and sobriety have made him much belov'd in all companies. Both he and his mother give you their most humble acknowledgments of your remembr'ing them. Be pleas'd to give mine to my cousin Stewart, who am both his and your

Most obliged obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

You may see I was in hast, by writeing on the wrong side of the paper.

For Mrs Steward, etc. ut supra.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Tuesday, July the 11th, [1699.]

As I cannot accuse my self to have receiv'd any letters from you without answer, so, on the other side, I am oblig'd to believe it, because you say it.

* The beautiful Fables.

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'Tis true, I have had so many fitts of sickness, and so much other unpleasant business, that I may possibly have receiv'd those favours, and deferr'd my acknowledgment till I forgot to thank you for them. However it be, I cannot but confess, that never was any unanswering man so civilly reproach'd by a fair lady. I presum'd to send you word by your sisters* of the trouble I intended you this summer; and added a petition, that you would please to order some small beer to be brew'd for me without hops, or with a very inconsiderable quantity; because I lost my health last year by drinking bitter beer at Tichmarsh. It may perhaps be sour, but I like it not the worse, if it be small enough. What els I have to request, is onely the favour of your coach, to meet me at Oundle, and to convey me to you: of which I shall not fail to give you timely notice. My humble service attends my cousin Stewart and your relations at Oundle. My wife and sonn desire the same favour; and I am particularly,

Madam,
Your most obedient servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stewart, etc.

LETTER XXXV.

TO SAMUEL PEPYS, ESQ.†

PADRON MIO, July the 14th, 1699.

I remember, last year, when I had the honour of dineing with you, you were pleased to recommend

* Dorothy and Jemima Creed; the latter of whom died Feb. 23, 1705–6, and was buried at Tichmarsh.

† The founder of the Pepysian library, Magdalen College,

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to me the character of Chaucer's "Good Parson." Any desire of yours is a command to me; and accordingly I have put it into my English, with such additions and alterations as I thought fit. Having translated as many Fables from Ovid, and as many Novills from Boccace and Tales from Chaucer, as will make an indifferent large volume in folio, I intend them for the press in Michaelmas term next. In the mean time, my parson desires the favour of being known to you, and promises, if you find any fault in his character, he will reform it. Whenever you please, he will wait on you, and for the safer conveyance, I will carry him in my pocket; who am

My *Padrons* most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

For Samuel Pepys, Esq.
Att his house in York-street, These.

Cambridge. He was secretary to the Admiralty in the reign of Charles II. and James II. "He first (says Granger, *Biogr. Hist.* iv. 322.) reduced the affairs of the Admiralty to order and method; and that method was so just, as to have been a standing model to his successors in that important office. His 'Memoirs' relating to the Navy is a well written piece; and his copious collection of manuscripts, now remaining with the rest of his library at Magdalen College in Cambridge, is an invaluable treasure of naval knowledge. He was far from being a mere man of business: his conversation and address had been greatly refined by travel. He thoroughly understood and practised music; was a judge of painting, sculpture, and architecture; and had more than a superficial knowledge in history and philosophy. His fame among the Virtuosi was such, that he was thought to be a very proper person to be placed at the head of the Royal Society, of which he was some time [1685, 1686,] president. His Prints have been already mentioned. His collection of English Ballads, in five large folio volumes, begun by Mr Selden, and carried down to 1700, is one of his singular curiosities.—*Ob.* 26 May, 1703."

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LETTER XXXVI.

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING BY MR PEPYS.

SIR, Friday, July 14, 1682.

You truly have obliged mee; and possibly, in saying so, I am more in earnest then you can readily think; as verily hopeing, from this your copy of one "Good Parson," to fancy some amends made mee for the hourly offence I beare with from the sight of so many lewd originalls.

I shall with great pleasure attend you on this occasion, when ere you'l permit it; unless you would have the kindness to double it to mee, by suffering my coach to wayte on you (and who you can gayne mee y^e^ same favour from) hither, to a cold chicken and a sallade, any noone after Sunday, as being just stepping into the ayre for 2 days.

I am, most respectfully,

Your hono^rd^ and obed^nt^ servant,

S. P.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Saturday, Aug. 5th, 1699.

This is only a word, to threaten you with a troublesome guest, next week: I have taken places

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for my self and my sonn in the Oundle coach, which sets out on Thursday next the tenth of this present August; and hope to wait on a fair lady at Cotterstock on Friday the eleventh. If you please to let your coach come to Oundle, I shall save my cousin Creed the trouble of hers. All heer are your most humble servants, and particularly an old cripple, who calls him self

Your most obliged kinsman,
And admirer,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stewart, Att
Cotterstock, near Oundle,
in Northamptonshire. These.
To be left with the Postmaster of Oundle.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Sept. 20th, 1699.

Your goodness to me will make you sollicitous of my welfare since I left Cotterstock. My journey has in general been as happy as it cou'd be, without the satisfaction and honour of your company. 'Tis true, the master of the stage-coach has not been over civill to me: for he turned us out of the road at the first step, and made us go to Pilton; there we took in a fair young lady of eighteen, and her brother, a young gentleman; they are related to the Treshams, but not of that name: thence we drove to Higham, where we had an old serving-woman, and a young fine mayd: we din'd at Bletso, and lay at Silso, six miles beyond Bedford. There we put out the old woman, and took in Councel-

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lour Jennings his daughter; her father goeing along in the Kittering coach, or rideing by it, with other company. We all din'd at Hatfield together, and came to town safe at seaven in the evening. We had a young doctour, who rode by our coach, and seem'd to have a smickering* to our young lady of Pilton, and ever rode before to get dinner in a readiness. My sonn, Charles, knew him formerly a Jacobite; and now going over to Antigoo, with Colonel Codrington,† haveing been formerly in the West Indies.—Which of our two young ladies was the handsomer, I know not. My sonn liked the Councellour's daughter best: I thought they were both equall. But not goeing to Tichmarsh Grove, and afterwards by Catworth, I missed my two couple of rabbets, which my cousin, your father, had given me to carry with me, and cou'd not see my sister by the way: I was likewise disappointed of Mr Cole's Ribadavia wine: but I am almost resolved to sue the stage-coach, for putting me six or seaven miles out of the way, which he cannot justify.

Be pleased to accept my acknowledgment of all your favours, and my Cousin Stuart's; and by employing my sonn and me in any thing you desire to have done, give us occasion to take our revenge on our kind relations both at Oundle and Cotterstock. Be pleas'd, your father, your mother, your two fair sisters, and your brother,‡ may find my sonn's service and mine made acceptable to them

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* To *smicker*, though omitted by Dr Johnson, is found, says Mr Malone, in Kersey's Dictionary, 1708; where it is interpreted—"To look amorously, or wantonly."

† Christopher Codrington, Governor of the Caribbee Islands.

‡ Colonel John Creed, a gallant soldier. He died at Oundle, Nov. 21, 1751, aged 73, and was buried in the church of Tichmarsh.

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by your delivery; and believe me to be with all manner of gratitude, give me leave to add, all manner of adoration,

Madam,
Your most obliged obedient Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stuart, Att
Cotterstock near Oundle,
In Northamptonshire,
These.
To be left with the Postmaster
of Oundle.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES MONTAGUE.*

SIR, [Octob. 1699.]

These verses† had waited on you with the former, but that they wanted that correction which I have given them, that they may the better endure the sight of so great a judge and poet. I am now in feare that I purged them out of their spirit;

* The superscription of this letter is wanting; but that it was addressed to Mr Montague, is ascertained by the words—"From Mr Dryden," being indorsed on it, in that gentleman's handwriting. Charles Montague, (afterwards Earl of Halifax,) was at this time First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer; the latter of which offices he had held from the year 1694.—The date is supplied by the subsequent letter.—MALONE.

† The verses addressed to his kinsman, John Driden, of Chesterton, Esq.—The former poem which had been submitted to Mr Montague, was that addressed to Mary, Duchess of Ormond. They were both inserted in the volume of Fables, which was then printing. See the next letter.—MALONE.

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as our Master Bushby us'd to whip a boy so long, till he made him a confirm'd blockhead. My cousin Driden saw them in the country; and the greatest exception he made to them was a satire against the Dutch valour in the last war. He desir'd me to omit it, (to use his own words) "out of the respect he had to his Sovereign." I obeyed his commands, and left onely the praises, which I think are due to the gallantry of my own countrymen. In the description which I have made of a Parliament-man,* I think I have not only drawn the features of my worthy kinsman, but have also given my own opinion of what an Englishman in Parliament ought to be; and deliver it as a memorial of my own principles to all posterity. I have consulted the judgment of my unbyass'd friends, who have some of them the honour to be known to you: and they think there is nothing which can justly give offence in that part of the poem. I say not this to cast a blind on your judgment, (which I could not do, if I endeavoured it,) but to assure you, that nothing relateing to the publique shall stand

* The lines alluded to occur in the Epistle to Driden of Chesterton, (Vol. XI. p. 81.) They are very cautiously worded; yet obviously imply, that opposition to government was one quality of a good patriot. Dryden, sensible of the suspicion arising from his politics and religion, seems, in this letter, to deprecate Montague's displeasure, and to prepossess him in favour of the poem, as inoffensive toward the government. I am afraid, that indemnity was all he had to hope for from the protection of this famed Mæcenas; at least, he returns no thanks for benefits hitherto received; and of these he was no niggard where there was room for them. Pope's bitter verses on Halifax are well known:

"Dryden alone what wonder came not nigh,
Dryden alone escaped his judging eye;
Yet still the great have kindness in reserve,—
He help'd to bury, whom he help'd to starve."

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without your permission; for it were to want common sence to desire your patronage, and resolve to disoblige you. And as I will not hazard my hopes of your protection, by refusing to obey you in any thing which I can perform with my conscience or my honour, so I am very confident you will never impose any other terms on me. My thoughts at present are fix'd on Homer; and by my translation of the first Iliad, I find him a poet more according to my genius than Virgil, and consequently hope I may do him more justice in his fiery way of writeing; which, as it is liable to more faults, so it is capable of more beauties, than the exactness and sobriety of Virgil. Since 'tis for my country's honour, as well as for my own, that I am willing to undertake this task, I despair not of being encourag'd in it by your favour, who am,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XL.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Nov. 7th, [1699.]

Even your expostulations are pleasing to me; for though they shew you angry, yet they are not without many expressions of your kindness; and therefore I am proud to be so chidden. Yet I cannot so farr abandon my own defence, as to confess any idleness or forgetfulness on my part. What has hind'red me from writeing to you, was neither ill health, nor, a worse thing, ingratitude; but a flood

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of little businesses, which yet are necessary to my subsistance, and of which I hop'd to have given you a good account before this time: but the court rather speaks kindly of me, than does any thing for me, though they promise largely; and perhaps they think I will advance as they go backward, in which they will be much deceiv'd; for I can never go an inch beyond my conscience and my honour.* If they will consider me as a man who has done my best to improve the language, and especially the poetry, and will be content with my acquiescence under the present government, and forbearing satire on it, that I can promise, because I can perform it; but I can neither take the oaths, nor forsake my religion; because I know not what church to go to, if I leave the Catholique; they are all so divided amongst them selves in matters of faith necessary to salvation, and, yet all assumeing the name of Protestants. May God be pleas'd to open your eyes, as he has open'd mine! Truth is but one; and they who have once heard of it, can plead no excuse, if they do not embrace it. But these are things too serious for a trifling letter.

If you desire to hear any thing more of my affairs, the Earl of Dorsett, and your cousin Montague, have both seen the two poems, to the Duchess of Ormond, and my worthy cousin Driden; and are of opinion, that I never writt better. My other friends are divided in their judgments, which to preferr; but the greater part are for those to my dear kinsman; which I have corrected with so

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* Dryden probably alludes to some expectations through the interest of Halifax. They were never realized; whether from inattention, or on account of his politics and religion, cannot now be known.

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much care, that they will now be worthy of his sight, and do neither of us any dishonour after our death.

There is this day to be acted a new tragedy, made by Mr Hopkins,* and, as I believe, in rhime. He has formerly written a play in verse, call'd "Boadicea," which you fair ladyes lik'd; and is a poet who writes good verses without knowing how or why; I mean, he writes naturally well, without art, or learning, or good sence. Congreve is ill of the gout at Barnet Wells. I have had the honour of a visite from the Earl of Dorsett, and din'd with him. —Matters in Scotland are in a high ferment, † and next door to a breach betwixt the two nations; but they say from court, that France and we are hand and glove. 'Tis thought, the king will endeavour to keep up a standing army, and make the stirr in

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* Charles Hopkins, son of Hopkins, Bishop of Derry, in Ireland. He was educated at Cambridge, and became Bachelor of Arts in 1688; he afterwards bore arms for King William in the Irish wars. In 1694, he published a collection of epistolary poems and translations; and in 1695, "The History of Love," which last gained him some reputation. Dorset honoured Hopkins with his notice; and Dryden himself is said to have distinguished him from the undergrowth of authors. He was careless both of his health and reputation, and fell a martyr to excess in 1700, aged only thirty-six years. Hopkins wrote three plays, 1. "Pyrrhus, King of Epirus," 1695; 2. "Boadicea, Queen of Britain," 1697; 3. "Friendship Improved." This last is mentioned in the text as to be acted on 7th November.

† The fate of the Scottish colony at Darien, accelerated by the inhuman proclamations of William, who prohibited his American subjects to afford them assistance, was now nearly decided, and the nation was almost frantic between rage and disappointment. "The most inflammatory publications had been dispersed among the nation, the most violent addresses were presented from the towns and counties, and whosoever ventured to dispute or doubt the utility of Darien, was reputed a public enemy devoted to a hostile and corrupt court."—LAING'S *History*, Book x.

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Scotland his pretence for it; my cousin Driden,* and the country party, I suppose, will be against it; for when a spirit is raised, 'tis hard conjuring him down again.—You see I am dull by my writeing news; but it may be my cousin Creed† may be glad to hear what I believe is true, though not very pleasing. I hope he recovers health in the country, by his staying so long in it. My service to my cousin Stuart, and all at Oundle. I am, faire Cousine,

Your most obedient servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stuart, Att
Cotterstock, near Oundle,
In Northamptonshyre,
These.
To be left at the Posthouse
in Oundle.

LETTER XLI.

TO MRS ELIZABETH THOMAS, JUN.‡

MADAM, Nov. 12, 1699.

The letter you were pleas'd to direct for me, to be left at the coffee-house last summer, was a great

* Mr John Driden of Chesterton, member for the county of Huntingdon.

† Mrs Steward's father, Mr John Creed, of Oundle.

‡ Mrs Thomas, "Curll's Corinna," well known as a hack authoress some years after this period, was now commencing her career. She was daughter of Emanuel Thomas, of the Inner Temple, barrister. Her person, as well as her writings, seems to have been dedicated to the service of the public. The

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honour; and your verses* were, I thought, too good to be a woman's; some of my friends, to whom I read them, were of the same opinion. 'Tis not over-gallant, I must confess, to say this of the fair sex; but most certain it is, that they generally write with more softness than strength. On the contrary, you want neither vigour in your thoughts, nor force in your expressions, nor harmony in your numbers; and methinks I find much of Orinda† in your manner; to whom I had the honour to be related, and also to be known. But I continued not a day in the ignorance of the person to whom I was oblig'd; for, if you remember, you brought the verses to a bookseller's shop, and enquir'd there, how they might be sent to me. There happen'd to be in the same shop a gentleman, who heareing you speak of me, and seeing a paper in your hand, imagin'd it was a libel against me, and had you watch'd by his servant, till he knew both your name, and where you liv'd, of which he sent me word immediately. Though I have lost his letter, yet I re-

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story of her having obtained a parcel of Pope's letters, written in youth, from Henry Cromwell, to whom they were addressed, and selling them to Curll the bookseller, is well known. In that celebrated collection, 2d Vol. 8vo. 1735, the following letters from Dryden also appear. It would seem Corinna had contrived to hook an acquaintance upon the good-natured poet, by the old pretext of sending him two poems for his opinion. She afterwards kept up some communication with his family, which she made the ground of two marvellous stories, one concerning the astrological predictions of the poet, the other respecting the mode of his funeral.

* "A Pastoral Elegy to the Memory of the Hon. Cecilia Bew," published afterwards in the Poems of Mrs Thomas, 8vo. 1727.

† Mrs Catharine Philips, a poetess of the last age. See Vol. XI. p. 111.

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member you live some where about St Giles's,* and are an only daughter. You must have pass'd your time in reading much better books than mine; or otherwise you cou'd not have arriv'd to so much knowledge as I find you have. But whether Sylph or Nymph, I know not: those fine creatures, as your author, Count Gabalis, assures us,† have a mind to be christen'd, and since you do me the favour to desire a name from me, take that of Corin-

* She lived with her mother, Mrs Elizabeth Thomas, (as we learn from Curll,) in Dyot-street, St Giles's; but in the first edition of the letter, for the greater honour, she represents it as addressed to herself at Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury.

† In this lively romance, written to ridicule the doctrines of Rosicrucian philosophy, we are informed, that the Nymphs of water, air, earth, and fire, are anxious to connect themselves with the sages of the human race. I remember nothing about their wish to be baptized; but that desire was extremely strong among the fays, or female genii, of the North, who were anxious to demand it for the children they had by human fathers, as the means of securing to them that immortality which they themselves wanted. Einar Godmund, an ancient priest, informed the learned Torfæus, that they often solicited this favour, (usually in vain,) and were exceedingly incensed at the refusal. He gave an instance of Siward Fostre, who had promised to one of these fays, that if she bore him a child, he would cause it to be christened. In due time she appeared, and laid the child on the wall of the church-yard, with a chalice of gold and a rich cope, as an offering at the ceremony. But Siward, ashamed of this extraordinary intrigue, refused to acknowledge the child, which, therefore, remained unbaptized. The incensed mother re-appeared and carried off the infant and the chalice, leaving behind the cope, fragments of which were still preserved. But she failed not to inflict upon Siward and his descendants, to the ninth generation, a peculiar disorder, with which they were long afflicted. Other stories to the same purpose are told by Torfæus in his preface to the "History of Hrolf Kraka," 12mo. 1715. I suppose, however, that Dryden only recollected the practice of magicians, who, on invoking astral spirits, and binding them to their service, usually imposed on them some distinguishing name. It is possible Paracelsus says something to the purpose in his Magna Philosophia.

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na, if you please; I mean not the lady with whom Ovid was in Love, but the famous Theban poetess, who overcame Pindar five times, as historians tell us. I would have call'd you Sapho, but that I hear you are handsomer. Since you find I am not altogether a stranger to you, be pleas'd to make me happier by a better knowledge of you; and in stead of so many unjust praises which you give me, think me only worthy of being,

Madam,
Your most humble servant,
and admirer,
JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XLII.

TO MRS ELISABETH THOMAS, JUN.*

MADAM, [Nov. 1699.]

THE great desire which I observe in you to write well, and those good parts which God Almighty and nature have bestow'd on you, make me not to doubt, that, by application to study, and the reading of the best authors, you may be absolute mistress of poetry. 'Tis an unprofitable art to those who profess it; but you, who write only for your

* In printing this letter, Mr Malone says, he "followed a transcript which he made some years ago from the original. It is preserved in a small volume in the Bodleian Library, consisting chiefly of Pope's original Letters to Henry Cromwell, which Mrs Thomas sold to Curll, the bookseller, who published them unfaithfully. It afterwards fell into the hands of Dr Richard Rawlinson, by whom it was bequeathed to that Library."

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diversion, may pass your hours with pleasure in it, and without prejudice; always avoiding (as I know you will,) the licence which Mrs Behn* allow'd her self, of writeing loosely, and giveing, if I may have leave to say so, some scandall to the modesty of her sex. I confess, I am the last man who ought, in justice, to arraign her, who have been my self too much a libertine in most of my poems; which I shou'd be well contented I had time either to purge, or to see them fairly burn'd. But this I need not say to you, who are too well born, and too well principled, to fall into that mire.

In the mean time, I would advise you not to trust too much to Virgil's Pastorals; for as excellent as they are, yet Theocritus is far before him, both in softness of thought, and simplicity of expression. Mr Creech has translated that Greek poet, which I have not read in English. If you have any considerable faults, they consist chiefly in the choice of words, and the placeing them so as to make the verse run smoothly; but I am at present so taken up with my own studies, that I have not leisure to descend to particulars; being, in the mean time, the fair Corinna's

Most humble and most
faithful Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

P. S. I keep your two copies† till you want them, and are pleas'd to send for them.

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* Afra Behn, whose plays, poems, and novels, are very indecent; yet an aged lady, a relation of the editor, assured him, that, in the polite society of her youth, in which she held a distinguished place, these books were accounted proper reading; and added, with some humour, it was not till after a long interval, when she looked into them, at the age of seventy, that she was shocked at their indecorum.

† The Pastoral Elegy on Mrs Bew, and the Triple League.

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LETTER XLIII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

Saturday, Nov. 26, [1699.]

AFTER a long expectation, Madam, at length your happy letter came to your servant, who almost despair'd of it. The onely comfort I had, was, my hopes of seeing you, and that you defer'd writeing, because you wou'd surprise me with your presence, and beare your relations company to town.—Your neighbour, Mr Price, has given me an apprehension, that my cousin, your father, is in some danger of being made sheriff the following yeare; but I hope 'tis a jealousy without ground, and that the warm season only keeps him in the country.—If you come up next week, you will be entertain'd with a new tragedy, which the author of it, one Mr Dennis, cries up at an excessive rate; and Colonel Codrington, who has seen it, prepares the world to give it loud applauses. 'Tis called "Iphigenia," and imitated from Euripides, an old Greek poet.* This is to be acted at Betterton's house; and another play of the same name is very shortly to come on the stage in Drury-Lane.—I was lately to visite the Duchess of Norfolk;† and she speaks

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* Colonel Codrington wrote an epilogue to Dennis's "Iphigenia." Dryden here talks rather slightingly of his acquaintance; but "Iphigenia" is a most miserable piece.

† Mary, the daughter of Henry Mordaunt, the second Earl of

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of you with much affection and respect. Your cousin Montague,* after the present session of parliament, will be created Earl of Bristoll,† and I hope is much my friend; but I doubt I am in no condition of having a kindness done, having the Chancellour ‡ my enemy; and not being capable of renounceing the cause for which I have so long suffer'd.—My cousin Driden of Chesterton is in town, and lodges with my brother in Westminster.§ My sonn has seen him, and was very kindly received by him. Let this letter stand for nothing, because it has nothing but news in it, and has so little of the main business, which is to assure my fair cousine how much I am her admirer, and her

Most devoted Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

I write no recommendation of service to our friends at Oundle, because I suppose they are leaveing that place; but I wish my Cousin Stuart a boy, as like Miss Jem: ‖ as he and you can make him.

Peterborough, and wife of Thomas, the seventh Duke of Norfolk, afterwards divorced for criminal conversation with Sir John Germaine. See the Proceedings in the *State Trials*.

* The Right Hon. Charles Montague.

† He was about a year after created Lord Halifax.

‡ Lord Somers.—Mr Malone is of opinion, that this passage adds some support to what has been suggested in our author's Life, that a part of Dryden's "Satire to his Muse" was written in his younger days by this great man. Yet I cannot think, that great man would be concerned in so libellous a piece; and in the same breath Dryden tells us, that he hoped Montague, who had really written against him, was much his friend.

§ Erasmus Dryden, who lived in King's-street, Westminster, and was a grocer. In Dec. 1710, he succeeded to the title of Baronet.

‖ Jemima, Mrs Steward's youngest daughter, probably then four or five years old.

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My wife and sonn are never forgetfull of their acknowledgments to you both.

For Mrs Stuart, Att
Cotterstock near Oundle,
in the County of Northampton, These.
To be left at the Posthouse
in Oundle.

LETTER XLIV.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Thurday, Dec. the 14, 1699.

When I have either too much business or want of health, to write to you, I count my time is lost, or at least my conscience accuses me that I spend it ill. At this time my head is full of cares, and my body ill at ease. My book is printing,* and my bookseller makes no hast. I had last night at bed-time an unwelcome fit of vomiting; and my sonn, Charles, lyes sick upon his bed with the colique, which has been violent upon him for almost a week. With all this, I cannot but remember that you accus'd me of barbarity, I hope in jeast onely, for mistaking one sheriff for another, which proceeded from my want of heareing well. I am heartily sorry that a chargeable office is fallen on

* "Fables Ancient and Modern."

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my cousin Stuart.* But my cousin Driden comforts me, that it must have come one time or other, like the small-pox; and better have it young than old. I hope it will leave no great marks behind it, and that your fortune will no more feel it than your beauty, by the addition of a year's wearing. My cousine, your mother, was heer yesterday, to see my wife, though I had not the happiness to be at home. —Both the "Iphigenias" have been play'd with bad success;† and being both acted one against the other in the same week, clash'd together, like two rotten ships which could not endure the shock, and sunk to rights. The King's proclamation against vice and profaneness is issued out in print;‡ but a deep disease is not to be cur'd with a slight medicine. The parsons, who must read it, will find as little effect from it, as from their dull sermons: 'tis a scare-crow, which will not fright many birds from preying on the fields and orchards. The best news I heare is, that the land will not be charg'd very deep this yeare: let that comfort you for your

---

* Elmes Steward, Esq., was appointed sheriff of the county of Northampton in Nov. 1699.

† Dennis's "Iphigenia" was performed at the theatre in Little Lincoln's Fields; and "Achilles, or Iphigenia in Aulis," written by Abel Boyer, and, if we are to believe the author, corrected by Dryden, was acted at the theatre in Drury-Lane. Dennis says in his Preface, that the success of his play was "neither despicable, nor extraordinary;" but Gildon, in his "Comparison between the two Stages," 8vo, 1702, informs us, that it was acted but six times; and that the other tragedy, after four representations, was laid aside. MALONE.

‡ In the London Gazette, No. 3557, Thursday, December 14, 1699, it is mentioned, that a proclamation for preventing and *punishing* immorality and profaneness, had been issued out on the 11th instant. We know, by the experience of our own time, the justice of Dryden's observation.

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shrievalty, and continue me in your good graces, who am, fair cousin,

Your most faithfull oblig'd servant,
JO: DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stuart,
Att Cotterstock, near Oundle,
in Northamptonshyre,
These.
To be left with the Postmaster
of Oundle.

LETTER XLV.

TO MRS ELIZABETH THOMAS, JUN.

MADAM, Friday, Dec. 29, 1699.

I HAVE sent your poems back again, after having kept them so long from you; by which you see I am like the rest of the world, an impudent borrower, and a bad pay-master. You take more care of my health than it deserves; that of an old man is always crazy, and, at present, mine is worse than usual, by a St Anthony's fire in one of my legs; though the swelling is much abated, yet the pain is not wholly gone, and I am too weak to stand upon it. If I recover, it is possible I may attempt Homer's Iliad. A specimen of it (the first book) is now in the press, among other poems of mine, which will make a volume in folio, of twelve shillings' price; and will be published within this month. I desire, fair author, that you will be pleas'd

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to continue me in your good graces, who am, with all sincerity and gratitude,

Your most humble servant,
and admirer,
JOHN DRYDEN.

LETTER XLVI.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Feb. 23d. [1699-1700.]

THOUGH I have not leisure to thank you for the last trouble I gave you, yet haveing by me two lampoons lately made, I know not but they may be worth your reading; and therefore have presum'd to send them. I know not the authours; but the town will be ghessing. The "Ballad of the Pews," which are lately rais'd higher at St James's church,* is by some sayd to be Mr Manwareing, or my Lord Peterborough. The poem of the "Confederates" some think to be Mr Walsh: the copies are both lik'd.† And there are really two factions of ladyes,

* Not at St James' Church, but at the Chapel Royal. The pews, it seems, were raised to prevent the devotions of the maids of honour from any distractions in time of service. But the ballad maliciously supposes, that the intention was to confine the sun-beams of their eyes to the preacher, Bishop Burnet. The ballad itself may be found in vol. X. p. 270.

† This poem is a banter upon the interest which the nobility took in the disputes between the Drury-Lane theatre, where Skipwith was manager, and that in Lincoln's Inn-Fields, of which Betterton was sovereign. The "Island Princess" of Fletcher had

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for the two playhouses. If you do not understand the names of some persons mention'd, I can help you to the knowledge of them. You know Sir

---

been converted into a sort of opera, by Peter Motteux, and acted at Drury-Lane in 1699. The peculiar taste of Rich for every thing that respected show and machinery is well known.

The CONFEDERATES, or the First Happy Day of the ISLAND PRINCESS.

Ye vile traducers of the female kind,
Who think the fair to cruelty inclined,
Recant your error, and with shame confess
Their tender care of Skipwith* in distress:
For now to vindicate this monarch's right,
The Scotch and English equal charms unite;
In solemn leagues contending nations join,
And Britain labours with the vast design.
An opera with loud applause is play'd,
Which famed Motteux in soft heroics made;
And all the sworn Confederates resort,
To view the triumph of their sovereign's court.
In bright array the well-train'd host appears;
Supreme command brave Derwentwater† bears;
And next in front George Howard's bride‡ does shine,
The living honour of that ancient line.
The wings are led by chiefs of matchless worth;
Great Hamilton,§ the glory of the North,
Commands the left; and England's dear delight,
The bold Fitzwalter|| charges on the right.

---

* Sir Thomas Skipwith, joint patentee and manager with Charles Rich of the Drury-Lane theatre.

† Mary Tudor, natural daughter of Charles the Second, and lady of Lord Ratcliff, (now Earl of Derwentwater,) to whom Dryden dedicated his Third Miscellany. See Vol. XII. p. 47.

‡ Arabella, daughter of Sir Edward Allen, Bart. She first married Francis Thompson, Esq., and was at this time the wife of Lord George Howard, (eldest son of Henry, the sixth Duke of Norfolk, by his second wife,) who died in March 1720-21.—MALONE.

§ Elizabeth, daughter of Digby, Lord Gerard, and second wife of James, Duke of Hamilton, who was killed in a duel by Lord Mohun, in November 1712.—MALONE.

|| Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Bertie of Uffington, in the county of Lin-

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Tho: Skipwith is master of the playhouse in Drury-Lane; and my Lord Scarsdale is the patron of Betterton's house, being in love with somebody there.

The Prince, to welcome his propitious friends,
A throne erected on the stage ascends.
He said:—Blest angels! for great ends design'd,
The best, and sure the fairest, of your kind,
How shall I praise, or in what numbers sing
Your just compassion of an injured king?
Till you appear'd, no prospect did remain,
My crown and falling sceptre to maintain;
No noisy beaus in all my realm were found;
No beauteous nymphs my empty boxes crown'd:
But still I saw, O dire heart-breaking woe!
My own sad consort* in the foremost row.
But this auspicious day new empire gives;
And if by your support my nation lives,
For you my bards shall tune the sweetest lays,
Norton† and Henley‡ shall resound your praise;
And I, not last of the harmonious train,
Will give a loose to my poetic vein.—
To him great Derwentwater thus replied:—
Thou mighty prince, in many dangers tried,
Born to dispute severe decrees of fate,
The nursing-father of a sickly state;
Behold the pillars of thy lawful reign!
Thy legal rights we promise to maintain:
Our brightest nymphs shall thy dominions grace,
With all the beauties of the Highland race;
The beaus shall make thee their peculiar care,
For beaus will always wait upon the fair:

---

coln, Esq. a younger son of Montague, the second Earl of Lindsey. She was at this time the wife of Charles Mildmay, the second Lord Fitzwalter of that family. —MALONE.

* Margaret, daughter of George, Lord Chandos, and relict of William Brownlow of Humby, in Lincolnshire.

† Richard Norton of Southwick, in Hampshire, Esq. Cibber's comedy, entitled, "Love's last Shift," was dedicated to this gentleman, in February 1696-7. Mr Norton died December 10, 1732, in his sixty-ninth year.

‡ Anthony Henley, of the Grange, in Hampshire, Esq., a man of parts and learning, and a correspondent of Swift, who died in 1711.

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The Lord Scott is second sonn to the Duchess of Monmouth. I need not tell you who my Lady Darentwater is; but it may be you know not her

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For thee kind Beereton and bold Webbe shall fight,*
Lord Scott† shall ogle, and my spouse shall write:‡
Thus shall thy court our English youth engross,
And all the Scotch, from Drummond down to Ross.
Now in his throne the king securely sat;
But O! this change alarm'd the rival state:
Besides he lately bribed, in breach of laws,
The fair deserter of her uncle's cause.
This roused the monarch of the neighbouring crown,
A drowsy prince, too careless of renown.§
Yet prompt to vengeance, and untaught to yield,
Great Scarsdale‖ challenged Skipwith to the field.
Whole shoals of poets for this chief declare,
And vassal players attend him to the war.
Skipwith with joy the dreadful summons took,
And brought an equal force; then Scarsdale spoke:—
Thou bane of empire, foe to human kind,
Whom neither leagues nor laws of nations bind;
For cares of high poetic sway unfit,
Thou shame of learning, and reproach of wit;
Restore bright Helen to my longing sight,
Or now my signal shall begin the fight.—
Hold, said the foe, thy warlike host remove,
Nor let our bards the chance of battle prove:
Should death deprive us of their shining parts,
What would become of all the liberal arts?
Should Dennis fall, whose high majestic wit,
And awful judgment, like two tallies, fit,

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* Perhaps General Webbe, whose "firm platoon" was afterwards celebrated by Tickell. Of the prowess of Mr Beereton no memorials have been discovered. MALONE.

† Lord Henry Scott, second surviving son of James, Duke of Monmouth, who was born in 1676. In 1706 he was created Earl of Deloraine; and died about 1730.

‡ The Earl of Derwentwater's poetry, which, according to Dryden, was none of the best.

§ The famous Betterton, who, in 1695, again divided the two companies, and headed that in Lincoln's Inn Fields,

‖ Robert, third Earl of Scarsdale, a protector of Betterton's company.

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Lord is a poet, and none of the best. Forgive this hasty billet from

Your most obliged servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stewart,
Att Cotterstock, near Oundle,
in Northamptonshire, These.
To be left with the Postmaster of Oundle.

LETTER XLVII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Tuesday, March 12th, 1699 [-1700.]

'Tis a week since I receiv'd the favour of a letter, which I have not yet acknowledg'd to you. About that time my new poems were publish'd, which are not come till this day into my hands.

Adieu, strong odes, and every lofty strain,
The tragic rant, and proud Pindaric vein.
Should tuneful D'Urfey now resign his breath,
The lyric Muse would scarce survive his death;
But should divine Motteux untimely die,
The gasping Nine would in convulsions lie:
For these bold champions safer arms provide,
And let their pens the double strife decide.
The king consents; and urged by public good,
Wisely retreats to save his people's blood:
The moving legions leave the dusty plain,
And safe at home poetic wars maintain.

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They are a debt to you, I must confess; and I am glad, because they are so unworthy to be made a present. Your sisters, I hope, will be so kind to have them convey'd to you; that my writeings may have the honour of waiting on you, which is deny'd to me. The town encourages them with more applause than any thing of mine deserves; and particularly, my cousin Driden accepted one from me so very indulgently, that it makes me more and more in love with him. But all our hopes of the House of Commons are wholly dash'd. Our proprieties are destroy'd; and rather than we shou'd not perish, they have made a breach in the Magna Charta;* for which God forgive them! Congreve's new play has had but moderate success, though it deserves much better.† I am neither in health, nor do I want afflictions of any kind; but I am, in all conditions,

Madam,
Your most oblig'd obedient servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stuart, att Cotterstock.
near Oundle, These.
By the Oundle Carrier, with
a book directed to her, These.
Northamptonshyre.

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* Alluding to the statutes imposing the oath of allegiance and supremacy on all Catholics, under the penalty of incapacity to hold landed property. 11 and 12 William III. cap. 4.

† The excellent comedy entitled the "Way of the World." It had cost Congreve much pains, and he was so much disgusted with the cold reception alluded to in the text, that he never again wrote for the stage.

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LETTER XLVIII.

TO MRS STEWARD.

MADAM, Thursday, April the 11th, 1700.

THE ladies of the town have infected you at a distance; they are all of your opinion, and like my last book of Poems* better than any thing they have formerly seen of mine. I always thought my verses to my cousin Driden were the best of the whole; and to my comfort, the town thinks them so; and he, which pleases me most, is of the same judgment, as appears by a noble present he has sent me, which surprised me, because I did not in the least expect it. I doubt not, but he receiv'd what you were pleas'd to send him; because he sent me the letter, which you did me the favour to write me. At this very instant, I heare the guns, which, going off, give me to understand, that the King is goeing to the Parliament to pass acts, and consequently to prorogue them; for yesterday I heard, that both he and the Lords have given up the cause, and the House of Commons have gained an entire victory.† Though under the rose, I

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* His Fables.

† King William had made large grants of lands out of the forfeited estates in Ireland, to his foreign servants, Portland, Albemarle, Rochford, Galway, and Athlone, and to his favourite, Lady Orkney. The Commons, who now watched every step of their deliverer with bitter jealousy, appointed a commission to inquire into the value of these grants; and followed it with a bill for resuming and applying them to the payment of public debt; "and, in order to prevent the bill from being defeated in the House of

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am of opinion, that much of the confidence is abated on either side, and that whensoever they meet next, it will give that House a farther occasion of encroaching on the prerogative and the Lords; for they, who beare the purse, will rule. The Parliament being risen, my cousin Driden will immediately be with you, and, I believe, return his thanks in person. All this while I am lame at home, and have not stirr'd abroad this moneth at least. Neither my wife nor Charles are well, but have intrusted their service in my hand. I humbly add my own to the unwilling High Sheriff,* and wish him fairly at an end of his trouble.

The latter end of last week, I had the honour of a visite from my cousine, your mother, and my cousine Dorothy, with which I was much comforted. Within this moneth there will be play'd, for my profit, an old play of Fletcher's, call'd the "Pil-

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Lords, they, by a form seldom used, and which very seldom should be used, tacked it to their bill of supply; so that the Lords could not refuse the one, without disappointing the other. The Lords, to secure themselves from that insignificancy, to which the form of the bill tended to reduce them, disputed, in some conferences with the Commons, the form of it with warmth; but the resumption which it contained with indifference. And in both Houses, even the servants of the Crown gave themselves little trouble to defeat it; partly to gain popularity, but more from national antipathy to foreigners, and envy at gifts in which themselves were no sharers. The King, making allowances for national weaknesses, and for those of human nature, passed the bill without any complaint in public, but with a generous indignation in private, which perhaps made the blow fall more heavy on his friends, when, in order to soften it, he said to them, that it was for his sake, and not for their own, they were suffering."—DALRYMPLE's *Annals*. William felt so deeply the unkindness offered to him, that he prorogued the Parliament without the usual ceremony of a speech from the throne.

* Mr Steward.

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grim," corrected by my good friend Mr Vanbrook;* to which I have added a new masque; and am to write a new prologue and epilogue. Southern's tragedy, call'd the "Revolt of Capua," will be play'd at Betterton's house within this fortnight. I am out with that Company, and therefore, if I can help it, will not read it before 'tis acted, though the authour much desires I shou'd. Do not think I will refuse a present from fair hands; for I am resolv'd to save my bacon. I beg your pardon for this slovenly letter; but I have not health to transcribe it.† My service to my cousin, your brother, who, I heare, is happy in your company, which he is not who most desires it, and who is, Madam,

Your most obliged obedient
Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

For Mrs Stuart,
Att Cotterstock, near Oundle,
in Northamptonshyre, These.
To be left with the
Postmaster of Oundle.

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* More commonly called Vanbrugh. In Dryden's age, the spelling of proper names was not punctiliously adhered to.

† Dryden died on the 1st of May, and this letter was written on the 11th of the preceding month. The prologue and epilogue were therefore composed within less than a month of his death.

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.

No. I.

DRYDEN'S *Degree as Master of Arts, granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, preserved in the Faculty Book*, (Book 6. p. 236. b.)

"Dispensatio JOANNI DRYDEN, pro gradu Artium Magistri.

"GILBERTUS providentiâ divinâ Cantuariensis Archiepiscopus, &c. dilecto nobis in Christo JOANNI DRYDEN, in Artibus Baccalaureo, perantiquâ Dreydenorum familiâ in agro Northamptoniensi oriundo, salutem et gratiam. QUUM in scholis rite constitutis mos laudabilis et consuetudo invaluerit, approbatione tam ecclesiarum bene reformatarum, quam hominum doctissimorum, à multis retrò annis, ut quicunque in aliqua artium liberalium scientia cum laude desudaverint, insigni aliquo dignitatis gradu decorarentur. Quum etiam, publicâ legum auctoritate muniti, Cantuarienses Archiepiscopi gradus prædictos et honoris titulos in homines bene merentes conferendi potestate gaudeant et jamdudum gavisi sint, prout ex libro authentico de Facultatibus

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taxandis Parlamenti auctoritate confirmato pleniùs apparet; Nos igitur prædictâ auctoritate freti, et antecessorum nostrorum exemplum imitati, te Joannem prædictum, cujus vitæ probitas, bonarum literarum scientia, morumque integritas, vel ipsius domini Regis testimonio, perspectæ sunt, MAGISTRI IN ARTIBUS titulo et gradu insigniri decrevimus, et tenore presentium in Artibus Magistrum actualem creamus, pariterque in numerum Magistrorum in Artibus hujusce regni aggregamus; juramento infra scripto priùs per nos de te exacto, et a te jurato: *Ego Joannes Dryden, ad gradum et titulum Magistri in Artibus per Reverendissimum in Christo patrem ac dominum, Gilbertum divinâ providentiâ Cantuariensem Archiepiscopum, totius Angliæ Primatem et Metropolitanum, admittendus, teste mihi conscientiâ testificor serenissimum nostrum regem Carolum Secundum esse unicum et supremum gubernatorem hujusce regni Angliæ, &c. sicut me Deus adjuvet, per sacra Dei evangelia* —Proviso semper quod hæ literæ tibi non proficiant, nisi registrentur et subscribantur per Clericum Regiæ Majestatis ad Facultates in Cancellaria.

"Dat. sub sigillo de Facultatibus, decimo septimo die mensis Junii, Anno Domini 1668, et nostræ translationis anno quinto."

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No. II.

DRYDEN'S PATENT.

Pat. 22. Car. II. *p.* 6. *n.* 6.

CHARLES THE SECOND, by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, &c. to the lords commissioners of our treasury, treasurer, chancellor, under-treasurer, chamberlaines, and barons of the exchequer, of us, our heires and successors, now being, and that hereafter shall bee, and to all other the officers and ministers of our said court and of the receipt there, now being and that hereafter shall bee, and to all others to whom these presents shall come, greeting.

Know yee, that wee, for and in consideration of the many good and acceptable services by John Dryden, Master of Arts, and eldest sonne of Erasmus Dryden, of Tichmarsh, in the county of Northampton, esquire, to us heretofore done and performed, and taking notice of the learning and eminent abilities of him the said John Dryden, and of his great skill and elegant style both in verse and prose, and for diverse other good causes and considerations us thereunto especially moving, have nominated, constituted, declared, and appointed, and by these presents do nominate, constitute, declare, and appoint him, the said John Dryden, our POET LAUREAT and HISTORIOGRAPHER ROYAL; giving and granting unto him, the said John Dryden, all and singular the rights, privileges, benefits, and advantages thereunto belonging, as fully and amply as Sir Geoffery Chaucer, knight, Sir John Gower,

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knight, John Leland, esquire, William Camden, esquire, Benjamin Johnson, esquire, James Howell, esquire, Sir William D'Avenant, knight, or any other person or persons having or exercising the place or employment of Poet Laureat or Historiographer, or either of them, in the time of any of our royal progenitors, had or received, or might lawfully claim or demand, as incident or belonging unto the said places or employments, or either of them. And for the further and better encouragement of him, the said John Dryden, diligently to attend the said employment, we are graciously pleased to give and grant, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant, unto the said John Dryden, one annuity, or yearly pension of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England, during our pleasure, to have and to hold, and yearly to receive the said annuity or pension of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England by the yeare, unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, from the death of the said Sir William D'Avenant lately deceased, for and during our pleasure, at the receipt of the exchequer, of us, our heirs and successors, out of the treasure of us, our heirs and successors, from time to time there remaining, by the hands of the treasurer or treasurers and chamberlains of us, our heirs and successors, there for the time being, at the four usual terms of the year, that is to say, at the feast of the nativity of St John the Baptist, St Michael the Archangel, the birth of our Lord God, and the annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by even and equal portions to be paid, the first payment thereof to begin at the feast of the nativity of St John the Baptist next and immediately after the death of the said Sir William D'Avenant deceased. Wherefore our will and pleasure is, and we do by these presents, for us, our

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heirs and successors, require, command, and authorize the said lords commissioners of our treasury, treasurer, chancellor, under-treasurer, chamberlains, and barons, and other officers and ministers of the said exchequer now and for the time being, not only to pay, or cause to be paid, unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, the said annuity or yearly pension of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England, according to our will and pleasure herein before expressed, but also from time to time to give full allowance of the same, according to the true meaning of these presents. And these presents, or the inrolment thereof, shall be unto all men whom it shall concern a sufficient warrant and discharge for the paying and allowing of the same accordingly, without any further or other warrant procured or obtained. And further, know ye, that we, of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, have given and granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant, unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, one butt or pipe of the best canary wine, to have, hold, receive, perceive, and take the said butt or pipe of canary wine unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, during our pleasure, out of our store of wines yearly and from time to time remaining at or in our cellars within or belonging to our palace of Whitehall. And for the better effecting of our will and pleasure herein, we do hereby require and command all and singular our officers, and ministers whom it shall or may concern, or who shall have the care or charge of our said wines, that they, or some of them, do deliver, or cause to be delivered, the said butt or pipe of wine yearly, and once in every year, unto the said John Dryden or his assigns, during our pleasure, at such time and times as he or they shall demand

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or desire the same. And these presents, or the inrolment thereof, shall be unto all men whom it shall concern, a sufficient warrant and discharge in that behalf, although express mention, &c. In witness, &c.

Witness the King at Westminster, the eighteenth day of August. [1670.]

Per breve de privato sigillo.

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No. III.

THE

AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE FABLES.

I DOE hereby promise to pay John Dryden, Esquire, or order, on the 25th of March, 1699, the sume of two hundred and fifty guineas, in consideration of ten thousand verses, which the said John Dryden, Esquire, is to deliver to me Jacob Tonson, when finished, whereof seaven thousand five hundred verses, more or lesse, are already in the said Jacob Tonson's possession. And I do hereby further promise and engage myselfe to make up the said sume of two hundred and fifty guineas, three hundred pounds sterling, to the said John Dryden, Esquire, his executors, administrators, or assigns, att the beginning of the second impression of the said ten thousand verses. In witnesse whereof, I have hereunto sett my hand and seal this twentieth day of March, 1698-9.

JACOB TONSON.

Sealed and delivered, being first stampt pursuant to the acts of Parliament for that purpose, in the presence of

Benj. Portlock,
Will. Congreve.

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March the twenty-fourth, 1698.

Received then of Mr Jacob Tonson the summ of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings, in pursuance of an agreement for ten thousand verses to be delivered by me to the said Jacob Tonson, whereof I have already delivered to him about seven thousand five hundred, more or less: he the sayd Jacob Tonson being obliged to make up the foresayd sum of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings, three hundred pounds, at the beginning of the second impression of the foresayd ten thousand verses.

I say, received by me,
JOHN DRYDEN.

Witness, Charles Dryden.

The following receipt is written on the back of JACOB TONSON'S *Agreement, dated March* 20, 1698-9.

June 11, 1713. Received of the within-named Jacob Tonson, thirty-one pounds five shillings, which, with two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings paid Mr John Dryden the 24th of March 1698, is in full for the copy of a book intituled "Dryden's FABLES," consisting of ten thousand verses, more or lesse: I say received as administratrix to the said John Dryden, of such effects as were not administered to by Charles Dryden.

ANN SYLVIUS.

Witnesses, Eliz. Jones.
Jacob Tonson, Junr.

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Paid Mr Dryden, March the 23d, 1698.

	L.	s.	d.
In a bag in silver	100	0	0
In silver besides	21	15	6
66 Lewis d'ores at 17s. 6d. . .	57	15	0
83 Guyneas at [1] 1 6 . . .	89	4	6
	268	15	0

250 Guyneas at L.1. 1s. 6d. are . . 268 15 0

L.	s.	d.
268	15	0
31	5	0
300	0	0

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No. IV.

MR RUSSEL's BILL

FOR

MR DRYDEN'S FUNERALLS.

For the funerall of Esq^r^ Dryden.

	L.	s.	d.
A double coffin covered with cloath, and sett of [off] with work gilt with gold	5	0	0
A herse with six white Flanders horses	1	10	0
Covering the herse with velvet, and velvet housings for the horses	1	0	0
17 plumes of feathers for herse and horses	3	0	0
Hanging the Hall* with a border of bays	5	0	0
6 dozen of paper escucheons for the Hall	3	12	0
A large pall of velvet	0	10	0
10 silk escucheons for the pall	2	10	0
24 buck: escucheons for herse and horses	2	8	0
12 shields and six shaffroones for ditto	2	8	0
3 mourning coaches with six horses	2	5	0
Silver dish and rosemary	0	5	0
8 scarves for musicioners	2	0	0
8 hatbands for ditto	1	0	0
17 yds of crape to cover their instruments	1	14	0
4 mourning cloakes	0	10	0
Pd 6 men moveing the corps to the Hall	0	6	0
8 horsemen in long cloakes to ride before the herse	4	0	0
Carried over	38	18	0

* The Hall of the College of Physicians.

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	L.	s.	d.
Brought over	38	18	0
12 footmen in velvet caps, to walk on each side the herse	1	19	0
6 porters that attended at the doores, and walked before the herse to the Abby, in mourning gowns and staves . .	1	10	0
An atchievement for the house . . .	3	10	0
	45	17	0

We may add to these accounts the Description of the Funeral itself, extracted from the London Spy of WARD, who was doubtless a spectator.

" A deeper concern hath scarce been known to affect in general the minds of grateful and ingenious men, than the melancholy surprise of the worthy Mr Dryden's death hath occasioned through the whole town, as well as in all other parts of the kingdom, where any persons either of wit or learning have taken up their residence. Wheresoever his incomparable writings have been scattered by the hands of the travellers into foreign nations, the loss of so great a man must needs be lamented amongst their bards and rabbies; and 'tis reasonable to believe the commendable industry of translations has been such, to render several of his most accurate performances into their own language, that their native country might receive the benefit, and themselves the reputation of so laudable an undertaking: and how far the wings of merit have conveyed the pleasing fruits of his exuberant fancy, is a difficult conjecture, considering what a continual correspondence our nation has with most parts of the universe. For it is reasonable to believe all Christian kingdoms and colonies at least, have been as much

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the better for his labours, as the world is the worse for the loss of him. Those who were his enemies while he was living, (for no man lives without,) his death has now made such friends to his memory, that they acknowledge they cannot but in justice give him this character, that he was one of the greatest scholars, the most correct dramatic poet, and the best writer of heroic verse, that any age has produced in England. And yet, to verify the old proverb, that poets, like prophets, have little honour in their own countries, notwithstanding his merits had justly entitled his corpse to the most magnificent and solemn interment the beneficence of the greatest spirits could have bestowed on him; yet, 'tis credibly reported, the ingratitude of the age is such, that they had like to have let him pass in private to his grave, without those funeral obsequies suitable to his greatness, had it not been for that true British worthy, who, meeting with the venerable remains of the neglected bard passing silently in a coach, unregarded to his last home, ordered the corpse, by the consent of his few friends that attended him, to be respited from so obscure an interment, and most generously undertook, at his own expence, to revive his worth in the minds of a forgetful people, by bestowing on his peaceful dust a solemn funeral answerable to his merit; which memorable action alone will eternalize his fame with the greatest heroes, and add that lustre to his nobility, which time can never tarnish, but will shine with equal glory in all ages, and in the very teeth of envy bid defiance to oblivion. The management of the funeral was left to Mr Russel, pursuant to the directions of that honourable great man the lord Jefferies, concerned chiefly in the pious undertaking.

"The first honour done to his deserving relics, was

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lodging them in Physicians College, from whence they were appointed to take their last remove. The constituted day for the celebration of that office, which living heroes perform in respect to a dead worthy, was Monday the 13th of May, in the afternoon; at which time, according to the notice given, most of the nobility and gentry now in town assembled themselves together at the noble edifice aforesaid, in order to honour the corpse with their personal attendance. When the company were met, a performance of grave music, adapted to the solemn occasion, was communicated to the ears of the company, by the hands of the best masters in England, whose artful touches on their soft instruments diffused such harmonious influence amongst the attentive auditory, that the most heroic spirits in the whole assembly were unable to resist the passionate force of each dissolving strain, but melted into tears for the loss of so elegant and sweet a ravisher of human minds; and, notwithstanding their undaunted bravery, which had oft scorned death in the field, yet now, by music's enchantment at the funeral of so great a poet, were softened beneath their own natures, into a serious reflection on mortality.

"When this part of the solemnity was ended, the famous Doctor G——th ascended the pulpit where the physicians make their lectures, and delivered, according to the Roman custom, a funeral oration in Latin on his deceased friend, which he performed with great approbation and applause of all such gentlemen that heard him, and were true judges of the matter; most rhetorically setting forth those elegies and encomiums which no poet hitherto, but the great Dryden, could ever truly deserve. When these rites were over in the College, the corpse, by bearers for that purpose, was handed into the hearse, being adorned with plumes of black feathers, and

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the sides hung round with the escutcheons of his ancestors, mixed with that of his lady's; the hearse drawn by six stately Flanders horses; every thing being set off with the most useful ornaments to move regard, and affect the memories of the numberless spectators, as a means to encourage every sprightly genius to attempt something in their lives that may once render their dust worthy of so public a veneration. All things being put in due order for their movement, they began their solemn procession towards Westminster Abbey, after the following manner:

"The two beadles of the College marched first, in mourning cloaks and hat-bands, with the heads of their staffs wrapt in black crape scarfs, being followed by several other servile mourners, whose business was to prepare the way, that the hearse might pass less liable to interruption; next to these moved a concert of hautboys and trumpets, playing and sounding together a melancholy funeral-march, undoubtedly composed upon that particular occasion; (after these, the undertaker, with his hat off, dancing through the dirt like a bear after a bagpipe. I beg the reader's pardon for foisting in a jest in so improper a place; but as he walked by himself within a parenthesis, so I have here placed him, and hope none will be offended;) then came the hearse, as before described, most honourably attended with abundance of quality in their coaches and six horses; that it may be justly reported to posterity, no ambassador from the greatest emperor in all the universe, sent over with the most welcome embassy to the throne of England, ever made his public entry to the court with half that honour as the corpse of the great Dryden did its last exit to the grave. In this order the nobility and gentry attended the hearse to Westminster Abbey, where the quire, as-

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sisted with the best masters in England, sung an Epicedium; and the last funeral rites being performed by one of the prebends, he was honourably interred between Chaucer and Cowley; where, according to report, will be erected a very stately monument, at the expence of some of the nobility, in order to recommend his worth, and to preserve his memory to all succeeding ages."

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No. V.

MRS THOMAS'S LETTERS

CONCERNING

DRYDEN'S DEATH AND FUNERAL;

Extracted from Wilson's Life of Congreve, 1730.

[As tales of wonder are generally acceptable to the public, I insert these wonderful Epistles, with the necessary caveat, that they are full of every kind of blunder and inconsistency.]

"These Memoirs were communicated to me by a lady, now living, with whom Mr Dryden corresponded under the name of Corinna, and which name he himself gave her.

'SIR,

'Mr Dryden was son of ——— Dryden, of an ancient and good family in Northamptonshire, by a sister of Sir Gilbert Pickering, Bart. of the same county; who has a handsome monument at Tichmarsh, erected in 1721, by the late widow Creed of Oundle, the daughter of another sister of Sir Gilbert's and niece to the famous Earl of Sandwich, who was killed in the Dutch war, 1667, being then admiral. He married Lady Elizabeth Howard, (a celebrated beauty) daughter to the old Earl of Berkshire, sister to Sir Robert Howard, Colonel Philip Howard, and Mr Edward Howard; (who wrote "The British Prince," &c.;) she bore him three sons, Charles, John, and Harry. He lived many years in a very good house in Gerrard Street, the 5th or 6th door on the left-hand from Newport-market. On the 19th of April, 1700, he said

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he had been very bad with the gout, and an erysipelas in one leg; but he was then very well, and designed to go soon abroad: but on the Friday following, he had eat a partridge for his supper; and going to take a turn in the little garden behind his house, was seized with a violent pain under the ball of the great-toe of his right foot, that, unable to stand, he cried out for help, and was carried in by his servants; when, upon sending for surgeons, they found a small black spot in the place affected: He submitted to their present applications; and when gone, called his son Charles to him, using these words, "I know," says he, "this black spot is a mortification; I know also, that it will seize my head, and that they will cut off my leg: but I command you, my son, by your filial duty, that you do not suffer me to be dismembered." As he, too truly, foretold, the event proved; and his son was too dutiful to disobey his father's commands. On the Wednesday morning following, being May-day, 1700, under the most excruciating dolours, he died. Dr Sprat, then bishop of Rochester, sent, on the Thursday, to Lady Elizabeth, that he would make a present of the ground, which was 40l. with all the other abbey-fees, &c. to his deceased friend. Lord Halifax sent also to my lady and Mr Charles, that if they would give him leave to bury Mr Dryden, he would inter him with a gentleman's private funeral, and afterwards bestow 500l. on a monument in the Abbey; which, as they had no reason to refuse, they accepted. On the Saturday following the company came, the corpse was put into a velvet hearse, and eighteen mourning coaches, filled with company, attending. When, just before they began to move, Lord Jefferies, with some of his rakish companions, coming by, in wine, asked, whose funeral? and being told,

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"What!" cries he, "shall Dryden, the greatest honour and ornament of the nation, be buried after this private manner? No, gentlemen; let all that loved Mr Dryden, and honour his memory, alight, and join with me in gaining my lady's consent, to let me have the honour of his interment, which shall be after another manner than this, and I will bestow 1000l. on a monument in the Abbey for him." The gentlemen in the coaches not knowing of the Bishop of Rochester's favour, nor of Lord Halifax's generous design, (these two noble spirits having, out of respect to the family, enjoined Lady Elizabeth and her son to keep their favour concealed to the world, and let it pass for her own expence, &c.), readily came out of the coaches, and attended Lord Jefferies up to the lady's bed-side, who was then sick. He repeated the purport of what he had before said; but she absolutely refusing, he fell on his knees, vowing never to rise till his request was granted. The rest of the company, by his desire, kneeled also; she being naturally of a timorous disposition, and then under a sudden surprise, fainted away. As soon as she recovered her speech, she cried, no, no. Enough, gentlemen, replied he, (rising briskly,) my lady is very good; she says, go, go. She repeated her former words with all her strength, but, alas! in vain, her feeble voice was lost in their acclamations of joy; and Lord Jefferies ordered the hearsemen to carry the corpse to Russell's, the undertaker, in Cheapside, and leave it there, till he sent orders for the embalment, which, he added, should be after the royal manner. His directions were obeyed, the company dispersed, and Lady Elizabeth and Mr Charles remained inconsolable. Next morning Mr Charles waited on Lord Halifax, &c. to excuse his mother and self, by relating the real truth: but

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neither his lordship, nor the bishop, would admit of any plea; especially the latter, who had the Abbey lighted, the ground opened, the choir attending, an anthem ready set, and himself waiting, for some hours, without any corpse to bury. Russel, after three days expectance of orders for embalment, without receiving any, waits on Lord Jefferies, who, pretending ignorance of the matter, turned it off with an ill-natured jest, saying, "Those who observed the orders of a drunken frolic, deserved no better; that he remembered nothing at all of it, and he might do what he pleased with the corpse." On this Mr Russel waits on Lady Elizabeth and Mr Dryden; but, alas! it was not in their power to answer. The season was very hot, the deceased had lived high and fast; and being corpulent, and abounding with gross humours, grew very offensive. The undertaker, in short, threatened to bring home the corpse, and set it before their door. It cannot be easily imagined, what grief, shame, and confusion, seized this unhappy family. They begged a day's respite, which was granted. Mr Charles wrote a very handsome letter to Lord Jefferies, who returned it, with this cool answer, "He knew nothing of the matter, and would be troubled no more about it." He then addressed the Lord Halifax and Bishop of Rochester, who were both too justly, though unhappily, incensed, to do any thing in it. In this extreme distress, Dr Garth, a man who entirely loved Mr Dryden, and was withal a man of generosity and great humanity, sends for the corpse to the College of Physicians in Warwick-lane, and proposed a funeral by subscription, to which himself set a most noble example; Mr Wycherley, and several others, among whom must not be forgotten, Henry Cromwell, Esq., Captain Gibbons, and Mr Christopher Metcalfe, Mr Dryden's

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apothecary and intimate friend, (since a collegiate physician,) who, with many others, contributed most largely to the subscription; and at last a day, about three weeks after his decease, was appointed for the interment at the Abbey. Dr Garth pronounced a fine Latin oration over the corpse at the College; but the audience being numerous, and the room large, it was requisite the orator should be elevated, that he might be heard; but, as it unluckily happened, there was nothing at hand but an old beer-barrel, which the doctor, with much good-nature, mounted; and, in the midst of his oration, beating time to the accent with his foot, the head broke in, and his feet sunk to the bottom, which occasioned the malicious report of his enemies, that he was turned a tub-preacher: However, he finished the oration with a superior grace and genius, to the loud acclamations of mirth, which inspired the mixed or rather mob-auditors. The procession began to move, a numerous train of coaches attended the hearse; but, good God! in what disorder, can only be expressed by a sixpenny pamphlet, soon after published, entitled, "Dryden's Funeral." At last the corpse arrived at the Abbey, which was all unlighted. No organ played, no anthem sung; only two of the singing boys preceded the corpse, who sung an ode of Horace, with each a small candle in their hand. The butchers and other mob broke in like a deluge, so that only about eight or ten gentlemen could get admission, and those forced to cut the way with their drawn swords. The coffin, in this disorder, was let down into Chaucer's grave, with as much confusion, and as little ceremony, as was possible; every one glad to save themselves from the gentlemen's swords, or the clubs of the mob. When the funeral was over, Mr Charles sent a challenge to Lord Jefferies, who re-

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fusing to answer it, he sent several others, and went often himself, but could neither get a letter delivered, nor admittance to speak to him; which so justly incensed him, that he resolved, since his lordship refused to answer him like a gentleman, he would watch an opportunity to meet him, and fight off hand, though with all the rules of honour; which his lordship hearing, left the town; and Mr Charles could never have the satisfaction to meet him, though he sought it till his death with the utmost application. This is the true state of the case, and surely no reflection to the manes of this great man.

"Thus it is very plain, that his being buried by contribution, was owing to a vile drunken frolic of the Lord Jefferies, as I have related. Mr Dryden enjoyed himself in plenty, while he lived, and the surplusage of his goods paid all his debts. After his decease, the Lady Elizabeth, his widow, took a lesser house in Sherrard-street, Golden-square, and had wherewithal to live frugally genteel, and keep two servants, to the day of her death, by the means of a small part of her fortune, which her relations had obliged Mr Dryden to secure to her on marriage. This was 80l. per annum, and duly paid at 20l. per quarter; so that, I can assure you, there was no want to her dying-day. He had only three sons, and all provided for like gentlemen. Mr Charles had served the Pontiff of Rome above nine years, in an honourable and profitable post, as usher to the palace, out of which he had an handsome stipend remitted by his brother John, whom, by the Pope's favour, he left to officiate, while he came to visit his father, who dying soon after his arrival, he returned no more to Italy, but was unhappily drowned at Windsor in swimming cross the river. Mr John died in his post at Rome, and Harry the youngest was a religious; he had 30l. a-year allow-

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ed by his college in Flanders, besides a generous salary from his near relation the too well-known Duchess of Norfolk, to whom he was domestic chaplain. Behold the great wants of this deplorable family!

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

CORINNA.

May 15, 1729.

P. S. 'Mr Dryden was educated at Westminster school, under the great Dr Busby, being one of the king's scholars upon the royal foundation.'

'SIR,

'Upon recollection, I think it must have been that remarkably fine gentleman, Pope Clement XI., to whom Mr Charles Dryden was usher of the palace. His brother John died of a fever at Rome, not many months after his father, and was buried there; whether before the Pope or after I cannot say; but the difference was not much. Mr Charles, who was drowned at Windsor, 1704, was doubtless buried there. Lady Elizabeth lived about eight years after her spouse, and for five years of the time, without any memory, which she lost by a fever in 1703; she was a melancholy object, and was, by her son Harry, as I was told, carried into the country, where she died. What country I never heard. I cannot certainly say where Mr Harry died, or whether before his mother or after.

'Mr Dryden never had any wife but Lady Elizabeth, whatever may have been reported.

'As he was a man of a versatile genius, he took

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great delight in judicial astrology; though only by himself. There were some incidents which proved his great skill, that were related to Lady Chudleigh at the Bath, and which she desired me to ask Lady Elizabeth about, as I after did; which she not only confirmed, by telling me the exact matter of fact, but added another, which had never been told to any; and which I can solemnly aver was some years before it came to pass. I purposely omitted these Narratives in the Memoirs of Mr Dryden, lest that this over-witty age, which so much ridicules prescience, should think the worse of all the rest; but, if you desire particulars, they shall be freely at your service.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

CORINNA.

16*th June*, 1729.

The Narratives referred to in the foregoing Letter, viz.

'Notwithstanding Mr Dryden was a great master of that branch of astronomy, called judicial astrology, there were very few, scarce any, the most intimate of his friends, who knew of his amusements that way, except his own family. In the year 1707, that deservedly celebrated Lady Chudleigh being at the Bath, was told by the Lady Elizabeth of a very surprising instance of this judgment on his eldest son Charles's horoscope. Lady Chudleigh, whose superior genius rendered her as little credulous on the topic of prescience, as she was on that of apparitions; yet withal was of so candid and curious a disposition, that she neither credited an attested tale on the quality or character

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of the relater, nor did she altogether despise it, though told by the most ignorant: Her steady zeal for truth always led her to search to the foundation of it; and on that principle, at her return to London, she spoke to a gentlewoman of her acquaintance, that was well acquainted in Mr Dryden's family, to ask his widow about it; which she accordingly did. It is true, report has added many incidents to matter of fact; but the real truth, taken from Lady Elizabeth's own mouth, is in these words:

" When I was in labour of Charles, Mr Dryden being told it was decent to withdraw, laid his watch on the table, begging one of the ladies, then present, in a most solemn manner, to take an exact notice of the very minute when the child was born: which she did, and acquainted him therewith. This passed without any singular notice; many fathers having had such a fancy, without any farther thought. But about a week after, when I was pretty hearty, he comes into my room; 'My dear,' says he, 'you little think what I have been doing this morning;' " nor ever shall," said I, " unless you will be so good to inform me." 'Why, then,' cried he, 'I have been calculating this child's nativity, and in grief I speak it, he was born in an evil hour; Jupiter, Venus, and the Sun, were all under the earth, and the lord of his ascendant afflicted by a hateful square of Mars and Saturn. If he lives to arrive at his eighth year, he will go near to die a violent death on his very birth-day; but if he should escape, as I see but small hopes, he will, in his twenty-third year, be under the very same evil direction: and if he should, which seems almost impossible, escape that also, the thirty-third or thirty-fourth year is, I fear'——I interrupted him here, " O, Mr Dryden, what is this you tell me? my blood runs cold at your fatal speech; recal it, I beseech you. Shall my

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little angel, my Dryden boy, be doomed to so hard a fate? Poor innocent, what hast thou done? No: I will fold thee in my arms, and if thou must fall, we will both perish together." A flood of tears put a stop to my speech; and through Mr Dryden's comfortable persuasions, and the distance of time, I began to be a little appeased, but always kept the fatal period in my mind. At last the summer arrived, August was the inauspicious month in which my dear son was to enter on his eighth year. The court being in progress, and Mr Dryden at leisure, he was invited to my brother Berkshire's to keep the long vacation with him at Charleton in Wilts; I was also invited to my uncle Mordaunt's, to pass the remainder of the summer at his country-seat. All this was well enough; but when we came to dividing the children, I would have had him took John, and let me have the care of Charles; because, as I told him, a man might be engaged in company, but a woman could have no pretence for not guarding of the evil hour. Poor Mr Dryden was in this too absolute, and I as positive. In fine, we parted in anger; and, as a husband will always be master, he took Charles, and I was forced to be content with my son John. But when the fatal day approached, such anguish of heart seized me, as none but a fond mother can form any idea of. I watched the post; that failed: I wrote and wrote, but no answer. Oh, my friend! judge what I endured, terrified with dreams, tormented by my apprehensions. I abandoned myself to despair, and remained inconsolable.

'The anxiety of my spirits occasioned such an effervescence of my blood, as threw me into so violent a fever, that my life was despaired of, when a letter came from my spouse, reproving my womanish credulity, and assured me all was well, and the

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child in perfect health; on which I mended daily, and recovered my wonted state of ease, till, about six weeks after the fatal day, I received an *eclaircissement* from Mr Dryden, with a full account of the whole truth, which belike he feared to acquaint me with till the danger was over. It was this: In the month of August, being Charles's anniversary, it happened, that Lord Berkshire had made a general hunting-match, to which were invited all the adjacent gentlemen; Mr Dryden being at his house, and his brother-in-law, could not be dispensed with from appearing.

'I have told you, that Mr Dryden, either through fear of being thought superstitious, or thinking it a science beneath his study, was extremely cautious in letting any one know that he was a dabbler in astrology, therefore could not excuse his absence from the sport; but he took care to set the boy a double exercise in the Latin tongue, (which he taught his children himself,) with a strict charge not to stir out of the room till his return, well knowing the task he had set him would take up longer time. Poor Charles was all obedience, and sat close to his duty, when, as ill fate ordained, the stag made towards the house. The noise of the dogs, horns, &c. alarmed the family to partake of the sport; and one of the servants coming down stairs, the door being open, saw the child hard at his exercise without being moved. 'Master,' cried the fellow, 'why do you sit there? come down, come down, and see the sport.' 'No,' replied Charles, 'my papa has forbid me, and I dare not.' 'Pish! quoth the clown, 'vather shall never know it;' so takes the child by the hand, and leads him away; when, just as they came to the gate, the stag, being at bay with the dogs, cut a bold stroke, and leaped over the court-wall, which was very low and very

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old, and the dogs following, threw down at once a part of the wall ten yards in length, under which my dear child lay buried. He was as soon as possible dug out; but, alas, how mangled! his poor little head being crushed to a perfect mash. In this miserable condition he continued above six weeks, without the least hope of life. Through the Divine Providence he recovered, and in process of time, having a most advantageous invitation to Rome, from my uncle, Cardinal Howard, we sent over our two sons Charles and John; (having, through the grace of God, been ourselves admitted into the true Catholic faith;) they were received suitable to the grandeur and generosity of his eminence, and Charles immediately planted in a post of honour, as gentleman-usher to his Holiness, in which he continued about nine years. But what occasions me to mention this, is an allusion to my dear Mr Dryden's too fatal prediction. In his twenty-third year, being in perfect health, he had attended some ladies of the palace, his Holiness's nieces, as it was his place, on a party of pleasure. His brother John and he lodged together, at the top of an old round tower belonging to the Vatican, (with a well staircase, much like the Monument,) when he knew his brother Charles was returned, went up, thinking to find him there, and to go to bed. But, alas! no brother was there: on which he made a strict enquiry at all the places he used to frequent, but no news, more than that he was seen by the centinel to go up the staircase. On which he got an order for the door of the foundation of the tower to be opened, where they found my poor unfortunate son Charles mashed to a mummy, and weltering in his own blood. How this happened, he gave no farther account, when he could speak, than, that the heat of the day had been most excessive, and as he

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came to the top of the tower, he found himself seized with a megrim, or swimming in his head, and leaning against the iron rails, it is to be supposed, tipped over, five stories deep. Under this grievous mischance, his Holiness (God bless him!) omitted nothing that might conduce to his recovery; but as he lay many months without hopes of life, so when he did recover his health, it was always very imperfect, and he continues still to be of a hectic disposition.

'You see here (continued Lady Elizabeth) the too true fulfilling of two of my dear husband's fatal predictions. But, alas! my friend, there is a third to come, which is, that in his thirty-third or thirty-fourth year, he or I shall die a violent death; but he could not say which would go first. I heartily pray it may be myself: But as I have ten thousand fears, the daily challenges Charles sends to Lord Jefferies, on his ungenerous treatment of my dear Mr Dryden's corpse; and as he has some value for you, I beg, my dearest friend, that you would dissuade him as much as you can from taking that sort of justice on Lord Jefferies, lest it should fulfil his dear father's prediction.'

"Thus far Lady Elizabeth's own words.

"This, if required, I can solemnly attest was long before Mr Charles died; to the best of my remembrance it was in 1701 or 1702, I will not be positive which. But in 1703, Lady Elizabeth was seized with a nervous fever, which deprived her of her memory and understanding, (which surely may be termed a moral death,) though she lived some years after. But Mr Charles, in August 1704, was unhappily drowned at Windsor, as before recited. He had, with another gentleman, swam twice over the Thames; but venturing a third time, it was sup-

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posed he was taken with the cramp, because he called out for help, though too late.

I am, Sir, &c.

CORINNA."

June 18, 1729.

Mr CHARLES DRYDEN'S *Letter to* CORINNA.

'*Madam,*

'Notwithstanding I have been seized with a fever ever since I saw you last, I have this afternoon endeavoured to do myself the honour of obeying my Lady Chudleigh's command. My fever is still increasing, and I beg you to peruse the following verses, according to your own sense and discretion, which far surpasses mine in all respects. In a small time of intermission from my illness, I write these following:

MADAM,

How happy is our British isle, to bear
Such crops of wit and beauty to the fair?
A female muse each vying age has blest,
And the last Phœnix still excels the rest:
But you such solid learning add to rhymes,
Your sense looks fatal to succeeding times;
Which, raised to such a pitch, o'erflows like Nile,
And with an after-dearth must seize our isle.
Alone of all the sex, without the rules
Of formal pedants, or the noisy schools,
(What nature has bestow'd will art supply?)
Have traced the various tracts of dark philosophy.

What happy days had wise Aurelius seen,
If, for Faustina, you his wife had been!
No jarring nonsense had his soul oppress'd,
For he with all he wish'd for had been bless'd.

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'Be pleased to tell me what you find amiss, or correct it yourself, and excuse this trouble from

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

CHAR. DRYDEN.'

Easter-Eve.

"I have searched all our ecclesiastical offices for the will of Mr Dryden, but I find he did not make any; administration was granted to his son Charles (his wife, the Lady Elizabeth Howard, being a lunatic for some time before her death) in June 1700."

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No. VI.

MONUMENT

IN

THE CHURCH AT TICHMARSH.

"In the middle of the north wall of the chapel within the parish church of Tichmarsh, in Northamptonshire, is a wooden monument, having the bust of a person at top, wreathed, crowned with laurel. Underneath, THE POET; and below, this inscription:

"Here lie the honoured remains
of Erasmus Dryden, Esq., and Mary Pickering his wife.
He was the third son of Sir Erasmus Dryden, an ancient Baronet who lived with great honour in this county, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.
Mr Dryden was a very ingenious worthy gentleman, and Justice of the Peace in this county.
He married Mrs Mary Pickering, daughter of the reverend Doc[r] Pickering,* of Aldwinckle, and grand-daughter to Sir Gilbert Pickering:

* Mr Malone doubts his being Doctor.

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Of her it may be truly said,
She was a crown to her husband:
Her whole conversation was as becometh
the Gospel of Christ.
They had 14 children; the eldest of whom was
John Dryden, Esq.,
the celebrated Poet and Laureat of his time.
His bright parts and learning are best seen in his
own excellent writings on various subjects.
We boast, that he was bred and had
his first learning here;
where he has often made us happie
by his kind visits and most delightful conversation.
He married the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter to
Henry* Earl of Berkshire; by whom he had three
sons, Charles, John, and Erasmus-Henry;
and, after 70 odd years, when nature could be no
longer supported, he received the notice of
his approaching dissolution
with sweet submission and entire resignation
to the Divine will;
and he took so tender and obliging a farewell of
his friends, as none but he himself could have
expressed; of which sorrowful number
I was one.
His body was honourably interred in Westminster
Abby, among the greatest wits of divers ages.
His sons were all fine, ingenious, accomplished
gentlemen: they died in their youth, unmarried:
Sir Erasmus-Henry, the youngest, lived
till the ancient honour of the family
descended on him.
After his death, it came to his good uncle,
Sir Erasmus Dryden;

---

* Thomas.

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whose grandson is the present Sir John Dryden,
of Canons-Ashby, the ancient seat of the Family.
Sir Erasmus Dryden, the first named, married his
daughters into very honourable familyes; the
eldest to Sir John Philipps;* the second to
Sir John Hartop;† the youngest‡ was married
to Sir John Pickering, great grand-father to
the present Sir Gilbert Pickering, Bart.;
and to the same persons I have the honour to be
a grand-daughter:
And it is with delight and humble thankfullness
that I reflect on the character of
my pious ancestors; and that I am
now, with my owne hand, paying my duty to
Sir Erasmus Dryden,
my great grand-father, and to
Erasmus Dryden, Esq.,
my honoured uncle,§ in the 80th year of my age.

ELIZA. CREED, 1722."

---

* Sir Richard Philipps, according to Collins.

† Sir Edward Hartop, says Collins.

‡ Susanna, the wife of Sir John Pickering, according to Collins, was the eldest daughter of Sir Erasmus Driden.

§ Erasmus Driden, the poet's father, was the writer's great uncle. All these corrections are made by Mr Malone.

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No. VII.

EXTRACT

FROM AN

EPISTOLARY POEM,

TO

JOHN DRYDEN, Esq.

OCCASIONED BY THE MUCH-LAMENTED DEATH

OF

THE RIGHT HON. JAMES EARL OF ABINGDON;

BY

WILLIAM PITTIS,

LATE FELLOW OF NEW-COLLEGE, IN OXON.

Quanto rectius hoc, quam tristi lædere versu
Pantolabum scurram Nomentanumq. Nepotem? HOR.
——Cadet et Repheus justissimus unus
Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui. ÆN. Lib. ii.

THE PREFACE.

1699. 13. *June.*

..... AND though I am not an author confirmed enough to carry my copies about to gentlemen's chambers, in order to pick up amendments and corrections, as the practice is now of our most received writers; yet I must, in justice to myself, and the gentleman who has favoured me with its perusal, tell the world, it had been much worse had not Mr Dryden acquainted me with its faults. Nothing indeed was so displeasing to him, as what

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was pleasing to myself, viz. his own commendations: and if it pleases the world, the reader has no one to thank but so distinguished a judgment who occasioned it.

I might here lay hold of the opportunity of returning the obliging compliments he sent me by the person who brought the papers to him before they were printed; but I may chance to call his judgement in question by it, which I always accounted infallible, but in his kind thoughts of me; and therefore refer the reader to the poem, in order to see whether he'll be so good-natured, as to join his opinion with the compliment the gentleman aforesaid has honoured me with.

POEM.

But thou, great bard, whose hoary merits claim
The laureat's place, without the laureat's name;
Whose learned brows encircled by the bays,
Bespeak their owner's, and their giver's praise;
Thou, Dryden, should'st our loss alone relate,
And heroes mourn, who heroes can'st create.
Amidst thy verse the wife already shines,
And owes her virtues, what she owes thy lines.
Down from above the saint our sorrows views,
And feels a second heaven in thy muse;
Whose verse as lasting as her fame shall be,
While thou shalt live by her, and she by thee.
Oh! let the same immortal numbers tell,
How just the husband lived, and how he fell;
What vows, when living, for his life were made;
What floods of tears at his decease were paid;
And since their deathless virtues were the same,
Equal in worth, alike should be their fame.
But thou, withdrawn from us, and public cares,
Flatter'st thy age, and feed'st thy growing years;

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Supine, unmoved, regardless of our cries,
Thou mind'st not where thy noble patron lies:
Wrapt in death's icy arms, within his urn,
Behold him sleeping, and, beholding, mourn:
Speechless that tongue for wholesome counsels famed,
And without sight those eyes for lust unblamed;
Bereaved of motion are those hands which gave
Alms to the needy, did the needy crave.
Ah! such a sight and such a man divine,
Does only call for such a hand as thine!
Great is the task and worthy is thy pen;
The best of bards should sing the best of men.
Awake, arise from thy lethargic state,
Mourn Britain's loss, though Britain be ingrate;
Nor let the sacred Mantuan's labours be
A *ne plus ultra* to thy fame and thee.
Thy Abingdon, if once thy glorious theme,
Shall vie with his Marcellus for esteem;
Tears in his eyes, and sorrow in his heart,
Shall speak the reader's grief, and writer's art;
And, though this barren age does not produce
A great Augustus, to reward thy muse;
Though in this isle no good Octavia reigns,
And gives thee Virgil's premium for his strains:
Yet, Dryden, for a while forsake thy ease,
And quit thy pleasures, that thou more may'st please.
Apollo calls, and every muse attends,
With every grace, who every beauty lends.
Sweet is thy voice, as was thy subject's mind,
And, like his soul, thy numbers unconfined;
Thy language easy, and thy flowing song,
Soft as a vale, but like a mountain strong.
Such verse as thine, and such alone, should dare
To charge the muses with their present care.
Thine, and the cause of wit, with speed maintain,
Lest some rude hand the sacred work profane,
And the dull, mercenary, rhyming crew,

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Rob the deceased and thee, of what's your due.
Such fears as these, (if duty cannot move,
And make thy labours equal to thy love,)
Should hasten forth thy verse and make it show
What thou, mankind, and every muse does owe.
As Abingdon's high worth exalted shines,
And gives and takes a lustre from thy lines;
As Eleonora's pious deeds revive
In him who shared her praises when alive:
So the stern Greek, whom nothing could persuade
To quit the rash engagements which he made,
With sullen looks, and helmet laid aside,
He soothed his anger, and indulged his pride;
Careless of fate, neglectful of the call
Of chiefs entreating, till Patroclus' fall.
Roused by his death, his martial soul could bend,
And lose his whole resentments in his friend;
As to the dusky field he wing'd his course,
With eyes impatient, and redoubled force,
And weep'd him dead, in thousands of the slain,
Whom living, Greece had begg'd his sword in vain.
O Dryden! quick the sacred pencil take,
And rise in virtue's cause, for virtue's sake;
Of heaven's the song, and heaven-born is thy muse,
Fitting to follow bliss, which mine will lose:
Bold are thy thoughts, and soaring is thy flight;
Thy fancy tempting, thy expressions bright;
Moving thy grief and powerful is thy praise,
Or to command our tears, or joys to raise.
So shall his worth, from age to age convey'd,
Shew what the hero did, and poet paid;
And future times shall practice what they see
Perform'd so well by him, and praised by thee;
While I confess the weakness of my lays,
And give my wonder where thou giv'st thy praise:
As I from every muse but thine retire,
And him in thee, and thee in him, admire.

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No. VIII.

EXTRACTS

FROM

POEMS ATTACKING DRYDEN,

FOR HIS SILENCE UPON

THE DEATH OF QUEEN MARY.

THE author of one of these Mourning Odes, inscribes it to Dryden with the following letter:

SIR,

THOUGH I have little acquaintance with you, nor desire to have more, I take upon me, with the assurance of a poet, to make this dedication to you, which I hope you will the more easily excuse, since you have often used the same freedom to others; and since I protest sincerely, that I expect no money from you.

I could not forbear mentioning your admired Lewis, whom you compare to Augustus, as justly as one may compare you to Virgil. Augustus (though not the most exact pattern of a prince) yet, on some occasions, shewed personal valour, and was not a league-breaker, a poisoner, a pirate: Virgil was a good man and a clean poet; all his excellent writings may be carried by a child in one hand more

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easily, than all your almonzors can be by a porter upon both shoulders.

When I saw your prodigious epistle to the translation of Juvenal, I feared you were wheeling to the government; I confess too, I long expected something from you on the late sad occasion, that has employed so many pens; but it is well that you have kept silence. I hope you will always be on the other side; did even popery ever get any honour by you? You may wonder that I subscribe not my name at length, but I defer that to another time. I hear you are translating again; let English Virgil be better than English Juvenal, or it is odds you will hear of me more at large. In the mean time, hoping that you and your covey will dislike what I *have written*, I remain, Sir, your very humble servant,

A. B.

There is also an attack upon our author, as presiding in the Wits Coffee-house, which gives us a curious view into the interior of that celebrated place of rendezvous. It is entitled, "Urania's Temple; or, a Satire upon the Silent Poets," and is as follows:—

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URANIAS TEMPLE;

OR,

A SATIRE UPON THE SILENT POETS.

Carmina nulla canam.——VIRG.

1694-5. 2. *March.*

A HOUSE there stands where once a convent stood,
A nursery still to the old convent brood:
This ever hospitable roof of yore
The famous sign of the old Osiris bore,
A fair red Io, hieroglyphic-fair,
For all the suckling wits o' the town milcht there.
This long old emblematic, that had past
Full many a bleak winter's shaking blast,
At last with age fell down, some say, confusion,
Shamed and quite dasht at the new Revolution;
Dropt out of modesty, (as most suppose,)
Not daring face the new bright Royal Rose.
Here in supiner state, 'twixt reeking tiff,
And fumigating clouds of funk and whiff,
Snug in a nook, his dusky tripos, sits
A senior Delphic 'mongst the minor wits;
Fear'd like an Indian god, a god indeed
True Indian, smoked with his own native weed.

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From this oped mouth, soft eloquence rich mint
Steals now and then a keen well-hammer'd hint,
Some sharp state raillery, or politic squint,
Hard midwived wit, births by slow labours stopt,
Sense not profusely shower'd, but only dropt.
Sometimes for oracles yet more profound,
A titillating sonnet's handed round,
Some Abdication-Damon madrigal,
His own sour pen's too overflowing gall.
I must confess in pure poetic rage,
Bow'd down to the old Moloch of that age,
His strange bigotted muse our wonder saw,
Tuned to the late great court tarantula.
What though worn out in pleasures old and stale,
The reverend Outly sculkt within the pale;
It was enough, like the old Mahomet's pigeon,
He lured to bread, and mask'd into religion.
Had that, now silent, muse been but so kind
As to this funeral-dirge her numbers join'd,
On that great theme what wonders had he told!
For though the bard, the quill is not grown old,
Writes young Apollo still, with his whole rays
Encircled and enrich'd, though not his bays.
Thus when the wreath, so long, so justly due,
The great Mecænas from those brows withdrew,
With pain he saw such merit sunk so far,
Shamed that the dragon's tail swept down the star.
Not that the conscience-shackle tied so hard,
But had he been the prophet, as the bard,
Prognostick'd the diminutive slender birth
His seven-hill'd mountain-labour has brought forth,
His foreseen precipice; that thought alone
Had stopt his fall, secured him all our own;
Free from his hypochondriac dreams he had slept,
And still his unsold Esau's birthright kept.
'Tis thus we see him lost, thus mourn his fall;
That single teint alone has sullied all,

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So have I in the muses garden seen
The spreading rose or blooming jessamine;
Once from whose bosom the whole Hybla train
The industrious treasurers of the rich plain,
Those winged foragers for their fragrant prey,
On loaded thighs bore thousand sweets away:
Now shaded by a sullen venom'd guest
Canker'd and sooted o'er to a spider's nest.
His sweets thus sour'd, what melancholy change,
What an ill-natured lour, a face so strange!
His life one whole long scene of all unrest,
And airy hopes his thin cameleon-feast;
Pleased only with the pride of being preferr'd,
The echoed voice to his own listning herd,
A magisterial Belweather tup,
The lordly leader of his bleating troop.
These doctrines our young Sullenists preach round,
The texts which their poetic silence found.
But why the doctor of their chair, why thou,
Their great rabbinic voice, thus silent too?
Could Noll's once meteor glories blaze so fair,
To make thee that all-prostrate zealot there?
Strange, that that fiery nose could boast that charm
Thy muse with those seraphic raptures warm!
And our fair Albion star to shine so bleak,
Her radiant influence so chill, so weak!
Gorged with his riotous festival of fame,
Could thy weak stomach pule at Mary's name!
Or was thy junior palate more canine,
And now in years grows squeamish, and more fine!
Fie, peevish-niggard, with thy flowing store
To play the churl—excuse thy shame no more.

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No. IX.

VERSES

OCCASIONED BY READING

MR DRYDEN'S FABLES.

INSCRIBED TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

BY MR JABEZ HUGHES.

Musæum ante omnes, medium nam plurima turba
Hunc habet, atque humeris extantem suspicit altis.—VIRG.

TO THE READER.

1720-1, *March.*

IT is now almost fourteen years since these lines were first written; and as I had no thought of making them public, I laid them aside among other papers; where they had still continued private, if it had not, in a manner, become my duty to print them, by the noble regard which is paid to Mr Dryden's memory, by his grace the Duke of Buckingham, who, to his high quality, has added the liberal distinction of having long been at once both an eminent patron of elegant literature, and the most accomplished judge and pattern of it.

It might indeed seem an adventurous presumption to offer so trivial a poem to his Grace's view; but he who is able to instruct the most skilful wri-

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ter, will have benevolence enough to forgive the imperfections of the weakest, and to consider the inscribing these slight verses to his Grace, merely as a respectful acknowledgment of the common obligation he has laid upon all who have a true value for English poetry, by thus honouring the remains of a man who advanced it so highly, and is so justly celebrated for beauty of imagination, and force and delicacy of expression and numbers.

I must also observe, that I have had the happiness to see one part of these verses abundantly disproved by Mr Pope, and accordingly I retract it with pleasure; for that admirable author, who evidently inherits the bright invention, and the harmonious versification of Mr Dryden, has increased the reputation his other ingenious writings had obtained him, by the permanent fame of having finished a translation of the Iliad of Homer, with surprising genius and merit.

UPON READING

MR DRYDEN'S FABLES.

Our great forefathers, in poetic song,
Were rude in diction, though their sense was strong:
Well-measured verse they knew not how to frame,
Their words ungraceful, and the cadence lame.
Too far they wildly ranged to start the prey,
And did too much of Fairy-land display;
And in their rugged dissonance of lines,
True manly thought debased with trifles shines.
Each gaudy flower that wantons on the mead,
Must not appear within the curious bed;
But nature's chosen birth should flourish there,
And with their beauties crown the sweet parterre.

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Such was the scene when Dryden came, to found
More perfect lays, with harmony of sound:
What lively colours glow on every draught!
How bright his images, how raised his thought!
The parts proportion'd to their proper place,
With strength supported, and adorn'd with grace.
With what perfection did his artful hand
The various kinds of poesy command!
And the whole choir of Muses at his call,
In his rich song, which was inspired of all,
Spoke from the chords of his enchanting lyre,
And gave his breast the fulness of their fire.
As while the sun displays his lordly light,
The host of stars are humbly veil'd from sight,
Till when he falls, they kindle all on high,
And smartly sparkle in the nightly sky:
His fellow bards suspended thus their ray,
Drown'd in the strong effulgence of his day;
But glowing to their rise, at his decline,
Each cast his beams, and each began to shine.
As years advance, the abated soul, in most,
Sinks to low ebb, in second childhood lost;
And spoiling age, dishonouring our kind,
Robs all the treasures of the wasted mind;
With hovering clouds obscures the muffled sight,
And dim suffusion of enduring night:
But the rich fervour of his rising rage,
Prevail'd o'er all the infirmities of age;
And, unimpair'd by injuries of time,
Enjoy'd the bloom of a perpetual prime.
His fire not less, he more correctly writ,
With ripen'd judgment, and digested wit;
When the luxuriant ardour of his youth,
Succeeding years had tamed to better growth,
And seem'd to break the body's crust away,
To give the expanded mind more room to play;
Which, in its evening, open'd on the sight,

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Surprising beams of full meridian light;
As thrifty of its splendour it had been
And all its lustre had reserved till then.
So the descending sun, which hid his ray
In mists before, diminishing the day,
Breaks radiant out upon the dazzled eye,
And in a blaze of glory leaves the sky.
Revolving time had injured Chaucer's name,
And dimm'd the brilliant lustre of his fame;
Deform'd his language, and his wit depress'd,
His serious sense oft sinking to a jest;
Almost a stranger even to British eyes,
We scarcely knew him in the rude disguise:
But, clothed by thee, the burnish'd bard appears
In all his glory, and new honours wears.
Thus Ennius was by Virgil changed of old;
He found him rubbish, and he left him gold.
Who but thyself could Homer's weight sustain,
And match the voice of his majestic strain;
When Phœbus' wrath the sovereign poet sings,
And the big passion of contending kings!
No tender pinions of a gentle muse,
Who little points in epigram pursues,
And, with a short excursion, meekly plays
Its fluttering wings in mean enervate lays,
Could make a flight like this; to reach the skies,
An eagle's vigour can alone suffice.
In every part the courtly Ovid's style,
Thy various versions beautifully foil.
Here smoothly turn'd melodious measures move,
And feed the flame, and multiply the love:
So sweet they flow, so touch the heaving heart,
They teach the doctor* in his boasted art.
But when the theme demands a manly tone,
Sublime he speaks in accents not his own.

* *Ego sum Preceptor Amoris.* ART. AM.

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The bristly boar, and the tremendous rage,
When the fell Centaurs in the fight engage;
The cruel storm where Ceyx lost his life,
And the deep sorrows of his widow'd wife;
The cover'd cavern, and the still abode
Of empty visions, and the Sleepy God;
The powers of nature, in her wonderous reign,
Old forms subverting, to produce again,
And mould the mass anew; the important verse
Does with such dignity of words rehearse,
That Virgil, proud of unexampled fame,
Looks with concern, and fears a rival name.
What vaunting Grecians, of their knowledge vain,
In lying legends insolently feign
Of magic verses, whose persuasive charm
Appeased the soul with glowing passion warm;
Then discomposed the calm, and changed the scene,
And with the height of madness vex'd again,—
Thou hast accomplish'd in thy wondrous song,*
With utmost energy of numbers strong.
A flow of rage comes hurrying on amain,
And now the refluent tide ebbs out again;
A quiet pause succeeds; when unconfined
It rushes back, and swells upon the mind.
The inimitable lay, through all the maze
Of harmony's sweet labyrinth, displays
The power of music, and Cecilia's praise.
At first it lifts the flatter'd monarch high,
With boasted lineage, to his kindred sky;
hen to the pleasures of the flowing bowl,
And mellow mirth, unbends his easy soul;
And humbles now, and saddens all the feast,
With sense of human miseries express'd;

---

* His Ode on St Cecilia's Day, entitled, Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music.

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Relenting pity in each face appears,
And heavy sorrow ripens into tears.
Grief is forbid; and see! in every eye
The gaiety of love, and wanton joy!
Soft smiles and airs, which tenderly inspire
Delightful hope, and languishing desire.
But lo! the pealing verse provokes around
The frown of rage, and kindles with the sound;
Behold the low'ring storm at once arise,
And ardent vengeance sparkling in their eyes;
Fury boils high, and zeal of fell debate,
Demanding ruin, and denouncing fate.
Ye British beauties, in whose finish'd face
Smile the gay honours of each gloomy grace;
Whose forms, inimitably fair, invite
The sighing heart, and cheer the ravish'd sight,
Say, what sweet transports, and complacent joy,
Rise in your bosoms, and your soul employ,
When royal Emily the tuneful bard
Paints in his song, and makes the rich reward
Of knightly arms, in costly lists array'd,
The world at once contending for the maid.
How nobly great does Sigismonda shine,
With constant faith, and courage masculine!
No menaces could bend her mind to fear,
But for her love she dies without a tear.
There Iphigenia, with her radiant eyes,
As the bright sun, illuminates the skies;
In clouded Cymon chearful day began,
Awaked the sleeping soul, and charm'd him into man.
The pleasing legends, to your honour, prove
The power of beauty, and the force of love.
Who, after him, can equally rehearse
Such various subjects, in such various verse?
And with the raptures of his strain controul,
At will, each passion, and command the soul?

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Not ancient Orpheus, whose surprising lyre
Did beasts, and rocks, and rooted woods inspire,
More sweetly sung, nor with superior art
Soothed the sad shades, and soften'd Pluto's heart.
All own'd, at distance, his distinguish'd name,
Nor vainly vied to share his awful fame;
Unrivall'd, living, he enlarged his praise,
And, dying, left without an heir his bays.
So Philip's son his universal reign
Extended amply over earth and main;
Through conquer'd climes with ready triumph rode,
And ruled the nations with his powerful nod;
But when fate call'd the mighty chief away,
None could succeed to his imperial sway,
And his wide empire languish'd to decay.

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No. IX.

AN

ODE BY WAY OF ELEGY,

ON

THE UNIVERSALLY LAMENTED DEATH

OF THE INCOMPARABLE

MR DRYDEN.

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam chari capitis? Precipe lugubres
Cantus Melpomene——
Quando ullam inveniam parem!
Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.
HORAT. Lib. i. Ode 35.

BY ALEXANDER OLDYS.

TO MY WORTHY FRIEND MR JAMES DIXON.

SIR,

1700, *22d June.*

THE many and great obligations which you have been pleased to lay on me, give me the greatest confusion imaginable at present, when I consider that I am suing for a greater favour than all, in having the liberty to prefix your name to these lines; which though I am sensible they will be condemned by the great, yet the shame of that can no way affect you, when I do you the justice to assure the town, that it is contrary to your knowledge that you are

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become my patron: so your nicer sense cannot be accountable in the least; for you had no hand in it, and you may plead

——Quæ non fecimus ipsi
Vix ea nostra voco.

Nay, you were not guilty of so much as of the knowledge of this my *wicked intentions;* wicked, I mean, if it should offend you and my other friends, who need not blush for me, since I have already such a terror upon my conscience for this aggression, as is, I think, a punishment in some measure equal to any crime; and all that I can urge in my defence is, that it was pure respect to the dear memory of this great man, to whom I had the honour to be known, that provoked, or, let me rather say, obliged me to expose myself on this occasion. I never attempted any thing in this measure for the public before; and I doubt not that I shall do yet severer penance for it, in the censures of our *awful wits*, which I already fear; but your judgment is still more dreadful than all, by,

Worthy Sir,

Your most obliged

Obedient and humble servant,

ALEXANDER OLDYS.

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AN

ODE ON THE DEATH

OF

MR DRYDEN.

I.

On a soft bank of camomel I sate,
O'ershaded by two mournful yews;
(Doubtless it was the will of fate
I this retreat should chuse.)
Where on delicious poetry I fed,
Amazing thoughts chill'd all my blood,
And almost stopt the vital flood,
As Dryden's sacred verse I read.
Whilst killing raptures seized my head,
I shook as if I had foreknown
What all-commanding fate had done;
What for our sovereign Dryden had design'd,
Till sleep o'erwhelm'd my brain, as sorrow had my mind;
To think that all the great, even he, must die,
And here, in fame alone have immortality.
When in my dream the fatal muse,
With hair dishevell'd, and in tears,
Melpomene appears;
Upon my throbbing heart her hand she laid,
Her hand as cold as death, and thus she said,—
"Least of my care, be calm'd! No more just heaven accuse!

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II.

"Eternal fate has said,—He must remove;
The bards triumphant wait for him above.
To everlasting day and blest abodes
(The seats of poets and of gods)
He's gone to fill the throne
Which none could fill but he alone;
The glorious throne for him prepared;
Of glorious acts the glorious, just reward.
See, see, as he ascends on high,
The sacred bands attending in the sky!
So low do they descend
To meet their now immortal friend!
Immortal there above, and here below,
As long as men shall wit and English know,
The unequall'd Dryden must be so,
Immortal in his verse, in verse unequall'd too."—
She said,—then disappear'd: when I
Could plainly see all that was done on high.

III.

I saw above an universal joy,
Perfect without alloy;
(So great as ne'er till then had been
Since the sweet Waller entered in,)
When all that sacred company
Brought the triumphant bard from ours to heaven's great jubilee;
That was the occasion of his happiness,
And of our sorrows, surely that the cause,
Call'd hence heaven's monarch's praise to help to express,
And to receive for that his own deserved applause.
There wanted still one in the heavenly quire,
Dryden alone was their desire,
Whom for the sacred song th' Almighty did inspire.

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'Twas pity to us that so long delay'd
His blest translation to eternal light;
Or, otherwise may we not be afraid,
'Twas for the sins of some who durst presume to write;
Who durst in verse, in sacred poetry,
Even heaven's own design bely,
And damn themselves with utmost industry!
For this may we not dread
The mighty prophet's taken from our head?
And though the fate of these I fear,
I in respect must venture here.
A long and racking war was sent,
Of common sins, a common punishment;
To the unthinking crowd the only curse,
Who feel no loss but in their purse:
But ah! what loss can now be worse?
The mighty Pan has left our mournful shore;
The mighty Pan is gone, Dryden is here no more!

IV.

When to the blest bright region he was come,
The vulgar angels gazed, and made him room:
Each laureat monarch welcomes him on high,
And to embrace him all together fly:
Then strait the happy guest is shown
To his bright and lofty throne,
Inferior there to none.
A crown beset with little suns, whose rays
Shoot forth in foliages resembling bays,
Now on his head they place:
Then round him all the sacred band
Loudly congratulating stand:
When after silence made,
Thus the sweetest Waller said:—
"Well hast thou merited, triumphant bard!
For, once I knew thee militant below,
When I myself was so;

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Dangerous thy post, the combat fierce and hard,
Ignorance and rebellion still thy foe;
But for those little pains see now the great reward!
Mack-Flecknoe and Achitophel
Can now no more disturb thy peace,
Thy labours past, thy endless joys increase;
The more thou hast endured, the more thou dost excel;
And for the laurels snatch'd from thee below,
Thou wear'st an everlasting crown upon thy hallow'd brow."

V.

The bard, who next the new-born saint addrest,
Was Milton, for his wondrous poem blest;
Who strangely found, in his Lost Paradise, rest.
"Great bard," said he, "'twas verse alone
Did for my hideous crime atone,
Defending once the worst rebellion.
A double share of bliss belongs to thee,
For thy rich verse and thy firm loyalty;
Some of my harsh and uncouth points do owe
To thee a tuneful cadence still below.
Thine was indeed the state of innocence,
Mine of offence,
With studied treason and self-interest stain'd,
Till Paradise Lost wrought Paradise Regain'd."
He said:—when thus our English Abraham,
(In heaven the second of that name,
Cowley, as glorious there as sacred here in fame,)
"Welcome, Aleides, to this happy place!
Our wish, and our long expectation here,
Makes thee to us more dear;
Thou great destroyer of that monstrous race,
Which our sad former seat did harass and disgrace,
Be blest and welcomed with our praise!

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Thy great Herculean labours done,
And all the courses of thy zodiac run,
Shine here to us, a more illustrious sun!
But see! thy brethren gods in poetry,
The whole great race divine,
Ready in thy applause to join,
Who will supply what is defect in me."

VI.

Rochester, once on earth a prodigy,
A happy convert now on high,
Here begins his wond'rous lays,
In the sainted poet's praise.
Fathomless Buckingham, smooth Orrery,
The witty D'Avenant, Denham, Suckling too,
Shakespeare, nature's Kneller, who
Nature's picture likest drew,
Each in their turn his praise pursue.
His song elaborate Jonson next does try,
On earth unused to eulogy;
Beaumont and Fletcher sing together still,
And with their tuneful notes the arched palace fill.
The noble patron poet now does try,
His wondrous Spenser to outvy.
Drayton did next our sacred bard address,
And sung above with wonderful success.
Our English Ennius, he who gave
To the great bard kind welcome to his grave,
Chaucer, the mightiest bard of yore,
Whose verse could mirth to saddest souls restore,
Caress'd him next, whilst his delighted eye
Express'd his love, and thus his tongue his joy:—
"Was I, when erst below," said he,
"In hopes so great a bard to see,
As thou, my son, adopted unto me,
And all this godlike race, some equal even to thee!

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O! 'tis enough."—Here soft Orinda* came,
And sprightly Afra,† muses both on earth,
Both burn'd here with a bright poetic flame,
Which to their happiness above gave birth;
Their charming songs his entertainment close,
The mighty bard then, smiling, bow'd, and rose.

VII.

Strait from his head each takes his laurell'd crown,
And on the golden pavement casts it down.
All prostrate fall before heaven's high imperial throne,
When the new saint begins his song alone;
Wond'rous even there it was confest,
Scarce to be equall'd by the rest;
Herbert nor Crashaw, though on earth divine,
So sweetly could their numbers join!
When lo! the light of twenty thousand suns,
All in one body, shining all at once,
Darts from the imperial to this lower court;
A light which they but hardly could support!
Then the great anthem was begun,
Which all the hallow'd bards together sung;
And by no choir of angels is outdone,
But by the great seraphic choir alone,
That day and night surround the awful throne of heaven's eternal King;
Even they themselves did the great chorus fill,
And brought the grateful sounds to heaven's high holiest hill.

VIII.

My soul shook with the sacred harmony, which soon alarm'd my heart;
I fancied I was falling from on high, and waken'd with a start:

---

* Mrs Philips. † Mrs Behn.

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"Waked," said I, "surely no; I did not sleep;
Can they be dreams which such impressions make?
My soul does still the blest ideas keep;
And still, methinks, I see them, though awake!
The other thrones too, which, though vacant, shone
With greater glory than the sun,
Come fresh into my mind;
Which once will lose their lustre by their bards out-done,
When fill'd with those for whom they are design'd.
Upon their fronts I saw the glittering names,
All written in celestial flames.
For Dorset what a palace did I see!
For Montague! And what for Normandy!
What glories wait for Wycherly!
For Congreve, Southerne, Tate, Garth, Addison?
For Stepney, Prior, and for Dennis too?
What thrones are void, what joys prepared and due?
The pleasant dear companion Cheek,
Whom all the great although at midnight seek,
This glorious wreath must wear, and endless joys pursue.
And for Motteux, my Gallic friend,
The like triumphant laurels wait;
Though heaven, I hope, will send it very late,
Ere they or he to their blest seats ascend.
'Tis in their verse, next his, that he must live,
Next his their lines eternal fame can give;
Then all the happiness on earth I know
Is, that such godlike men as they are with us still below."

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No. X.

TO THE

MEMORY OF MR DRYDEN,

A POEM.

Huic versatile ingenium sic pariter ad omnia fuit,
Ut ad id unum natum diceres quodcunque ageret.

1700, 17*th June.*

When mortals form'd of common clay expire,
These vulgar souls an elegy require;
But some great hero of more heavenly frame,
Exerts his valour, and extends his fame;
Below the spheres impatient to abide,
With universal joy is deified.
Thus our triumphant Bard from hence is fled,
But let us never, never say he's dead;
Let poetasters make the Muses mourn,
And common-place it o'er his sacred urn;
The public voice exalts him to the sky,
And fate decrees him immortality;
Ordains, instead of tears or mournful hearse,
His apotheosis be sung in verse.
Great poets sure are form'd of heavenly race,
And with great heroes justly claim a place.

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As Cæsar's pen did Cæsar best commend,
And all the elegies of Rome transcend;
So Dryden's muse alone, like Phœbus bright,
Outshines all human praise, or borrow'd light;
To form his image, and to make it true,
There must be art, and inspiration too.
Auspicious stars had doom'd him to the trade,
By nature framed, by art a poet made:
Thus Maro's words and sense in him we see,
And Ovid's teeming vein of poesy.
In his vast miscellaneous works we find,
What charms at once, and edifies the mind;
His pregnant muse has in the offspring shown
What's rare for use, or beauty to be known:
In monumental everlasting verse
Epitomised, he grasp'd the universe.
No power but his could tune a British lyre
To sweeter notes than any Tuscan quire,
Teutonic words to animate and raise,
Strong, shining, musical, as attic lays;
Rude matter indisposed he form'd polite,
His muse seem'd rather to create than write.
His nervous eloquence is brighter far
Than florid pulpit, or the noisy bar.
His periods shine harmonious in the close,
As if a muse presided in his prose;
Yet unaffected plain, but strong his style,
It overflows to fructify, like Nile.
The God of wit conspires with all the Nine,
To make the orator and poet join.
We're charm'd when he the lady or the friend,
Pleased in majestic numbers to commend.
The panegyric flows in streams profuse,
When worth or beauty sublimates the muse.
His notes are moving, powerful, and strong,
As Orpheus' lyre, or as a Syren's song;

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Sweet as the happy Idumean fields,
And fragrant as the flowers that Tempe yields.
Thrice happy she to whom such tribute's paid,
And has such incense at her altar laid;
A sacrifice that might with envy move
Jove's consort, or the charming Queen of Love.
His lasting lines will give a sacred name,
(Eternal records in the book of fame,)
His favourites are doom'd by Jove's decree,
To share with him in immortality.

The wealthy muse on innate mines could live,
Though no Mæcenas any smile would give;
His light not borrow'd, but was all his own;
His rays were bright and warm without the sun.

Pictures (weak images of him) are sold,
The French are proud to have the head for gold:
The echo of his verse has charm'd their ear,—
O could they comprehend the sound they hear!
Who hug the cloud, caress an airy face,
What would they give the goddess to embrace?

The characters his steady muse could frame,
Are more than like, they are so much the same;
The pencil and the mirror faintly live,
'Tis but the shadow of a life they give;
Like resurrection from the silent grave,
He the numeric soul and body gave.

No art, no hand but his could e'er bring home
The noblest choicest flowers of Greece and Rome;
Transplant them with sublimest art and toil,
And make them flourish in a British soil.
Whatever ore he cast into his mould
He did the dark philosophy unfold,
And by a touch converted all to gold.
With epic feet who e'er can steady run,
May drive the fiery chariot of the sun,
Must neither soar too high, nor fall too low;
Must neither burn like fire, nor freeze like snow.

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All ages mighty conquerors have known,
Who courage and their power in arms have shown:
Greece knew but one, and Rome the Mantuan swain,
Who durst engage in lofty epic strain;
Heroics here were lands unknown before,
Our great Columbus first descried the shore.
No prophet moved the passions of the mind,
With sovereign power and force so unconfined:
We sympathized with his poetic rage,
In lofty buskins when he ruled the stage;
He roused our love, our hope, despairs, and fears,
Dissolved in joy we were, or drown'd in tears.
When juster indignation roused his hate,
Insipid rhymes to lash, or knaves of state;
Each line's a sting, and ev'ry sting a death,
As if their fate depended on his breath.
Like sun-beams swift, his fiery shafts were sent,
Or lightning darted from the firmament.
No warmer clime, no age or muse divine,
In pointed satire could our bard outshine.
His unexhausted force knew no decay;
In spite of years, his muse grew young and gay,
And vigorous, like the patriarch of old,
His last-born Joseph cast in finest mould;
This son of sixty-nine, surpassing fair,
With any elder offspring may compare,
Has charms in courts of monarchs to be seen,
Caress'd and cherish'd by a longing queen.
Great prophets oft extend their just command,
Receive the tribute of a foreign land;
When in their own ungrateful native ground
Few just admiring votaries they found.
But when these god-like men their clay resign,
Pale Envy's laid a victim at their shrine;
United mortals do their worth proclaim,
And altars raise to their eternal fame.

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Wealth, beauty, force of wit, without allay,
In Dryden's heavenly muse profusely lay;
Which mighty charms did never yet combine,
In any single deity to shine,
But were dispensed, more thriftily, between
Jove's wife, his daughter, and the Cyprian queen.
The nymphs recorded in his artful lays,
Produce the grateful homage of their praise;
Assisted in their vows by powers divine,
Offer their sacred incense at his shrine.
The spheres exalt their music, to commend
The poet's master and the muse's friend;
In concert form seraphic notes to sing,
Of numbers, and of harmony the king.
In this triumphant scene to act her part,
Nature's attended by her hand-maid, Art:
Resounding Echo, with her mimic voice,
Concurs to make the universe rejoice.
Let ev'ry tongue and pen the poet sing,
Who mounts Parnassus top with lofty wing;
Whose splendid muse has crowns of laurel won,
That brave the shining beauties of the sun.
His lines (those sacred reliques of the mind)
Not by the laws of fate or war confined,
In spite of flames will everlasting prove,
Devouring rust of time, or angry Jove.

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No. XI.

EXTRACT

FROM

POETÆ BRITANNICI.

A POEM, SATIRICAL AND PANEGYRICAL.

1700. *9th January.*

L—GH aim'd to rise above great Dr—n's height,
But lofty Dryden kept a steady flight.
Like Dædalus, he times with prudent care
His well-wax'd wings, and waves in middle air.
Crown'd with the sacred snow of reverend years,
Dryden above the ignobler crowd appears,
Raises his laurell'd head, and, as he goes,
O'er-shoulders all, and like Apollo shows.
The native spark, which first advanced his name,
By industry he kindled to a flame.
Then to a different coast his judgment flew,
He left the old world behind, and found a new.
On the strong columns of his lasting wit,
Instructive Dryden built, and peopled it.

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In every page delight and profit shines;
Immortal sense flows in his mighty lines.
His images so strong and lively be,
I hear not words alone, but substance see,
The proper phrase of our exalted tongue
To such perfection from his numbers sprung;
His tropes continued, and his figures fine,
All of a piece throughout, and all divine.
Adapted words and sweet expressions move
Our various passions, pity, rage, and love.
I weep to hear fond Antony complain
In Shakespeare's fancy, but in Virgil's strain.
Though for the comic, others we prefer,
Himself the judge; nor does the judgment err.
But comedy, 'tis thought, can never claim
The sounding title of a poem's name.
For raillery, and what creates a smile,
Betrays no lofty genius, nor a style.
That heavenly heat refuses to be seen
In a town character, and comic mien,
If we would do him right, we must produce
The Sophoclean buskin; when his muse
With her loud accents fill'd the listning ear,
And peals applauding shook the theatre.
They fondly seek, great name, to blast thy praise,
Who think that foreign banks produced thy bays.
Is he obliged to France, who draws from thence,
By English energy, their captive sense?
Though Edward and famed Henry warr'd in vain,
Subduing what they could not long retain,
Yet now, beyond our arms, the muse prevails,
And poets conquer, when the hero fails.
This does superior excellence betray:
O could I write in thy immortal way!
If Art be Nature's scholar, and can make
Such great improvements, Nature must forsake

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Her ancient style; and in some grand design,
She must her own originals decline,
And for the noblest copies follow thine.
This all the world must offer to thy praise,
And this Thalia sang in rural lays.
As sleep to weary drovers on the plain,
As a sweet river to a thirsty swain,
Such divine Dryden's charming verses show,
Please like the river, like the river flow.
When his first years in mighty order ran,
And cradled infancy bespoke the man,
Around his lips the waxen artists hung,
And breath'd ambrosial odours as they sung.
In yellow clusters from their hives they flew,
And on his tongue distill'd eternal dew:
Thence from his mouth harmonious numbers broke,
More sweet than honey from the knotted oak;
More smooth than streams, that from a mountain glide,
Yet lofty as the top from whence they slide.
Long he possest the hereditary plains,
Beloved by all the herdsmen, and the swains,
Till he resign'd his flock, opprest with years,
And olden'd in his woe, as well as fears.
Yet still, like Etna's mount, he kept his fire,
And look'd, like beauteous roses on a brier:
He smiled, like Phœbus in a stormy morn,
And sung, like Philomel against a thorn.

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No. XII.

SOME ACCOUNT

OF

THE NINE MUSES;

Or, Poems written by nine several Ladies, upon the death of the late famous JOHN DRYDEN, *Esq.*

As earth thy body keeps, thy soul the sky,
So shall this verse preserve thy memory;
For thou shalt make it live, because it sings of thee.

London: Printed for Richard Basset, at the Mitre, in Fleet Street, 1700.

THE work is dedicated to the Right Hon. Charles Montague, (Lord Halifax,) by the publisher Basset, who thus apologizes for the intrusion:

"The ladies indeed themselves might have had a better plea for your reception; but since the modesty which is natural to the sex they are of, will not suffer them to do that violence to their tempers, I think myself obliged to make a present of what is written in honour of the most consummate poet among our English dead, to the most distinguished among the living. You have been pleased already to shew your respect to his memory, in contributing so largely to his burial, notwithstanding he had that

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unhappiness of conduct, when alive, to give you cause to disclaim the protection of him."

The dedication is followed by a commendatory copy of verses, addressed to the publisher, and signed Philomusus; of which most readers will think the following lines a sufficient specimen:

> Hence issues forth a most delightful song,
> Fair as their sex, and as their judgment strong;
> Moving its force, and tempting in its ease;
> Secured of fame, unknowing to displease;
> Its every word like Aganippe, clear,
> And close its meaning, and its sense severe:
> As virtuous thoughts with chaste expression join,
> And make them truly, what they feign, divine.

The poems of these divine ladies, as their eulogist phrases them, appear in the following order:

Melpomene, the Tragic Muse, personated by Mrs Manley, refers to his elegies and tragedies. Melpomene sorrows for him:

> Who sorrow'd Killigrew's untimely fall,
> And more than Roman made her funeral;
> Inspired by me, for me he could command,
> Bright Abingdon's rich monument shall stand
> For evermore the wonder of the land;
> Oldham he snatch'd from an ignoble fate;
> Changed his cross star for one more fortunate;
> For who would not with pride resign his breath,
> To be so loved, to be so blest in death?

The eulogiums of Cromwell and Charles then praised. Of the last it is said,

> For this alone he did deserve the prize,
> As Ranelagh, for her victorious eyes.

Cleopatra and St Catharine are mentioned; then

> ——Dorax and Sebastian both contend
> To shew the generous enemy and friend.

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Urania, the Divine Muse, by the Honourable the Lady Peirce. This lady, after much tragic dole, is wonderfully comforted by recollecting that Garth survives, though Dryden is dead:

> More I'll not urge, but know, our wishes can
> No higher soar, since Garth's the glorious man;
> Him let us constitute in Dryden's stead,
> Let laurels ever flourish on his head.

Urania, after mentioning Virgil, exclaims,

> O give us Homer yet, thou glorious bard!

Erato, the Amorous Muse, by Mrs S. Field. She claims the merit of Dryden's love poems, on the following grounds:

> Oft I for ink did radiant nectar bring,
> And gave him quills from infant Cupid's wing.

Euterpe, the Lyric Muse, by Mrs J. E. Euterpe, of course, pours forth her sorrow in a scrambling Pindaric ode:

> But, oh! they could not stand the rage
> Of an ill-natured and lethargic age,
> Who, spite of wit, would stupidly be wise;
> All noble raptures, extasies despise,
> And only plodders after sense will prize.

Euterpe eulogizeth

> Garth, whom the god of wisdom did foredoom,
> And stock with eloquence, to pay thy tomb
> The most triumphant rites of ancient Rome.

Euterpe is true to her own character; for one may plod in vain after sense through her lyric effusion.

Thalia, the Comic Muse, by Mrs Manley. A pastoral dialogue betwixt Alexis, Daphne, Aminta, and

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Thalia. After the usual questions concerning the cause of sorrow, Thalia, invoked by the nymphs and swains, sings a ditty, bearing the following burden:

Bring here the spring, and throw fresh garlands on,
With all the flowers that wait the rising sun;
These evergreens, true emblems of his soul,
Take, Daphne, these, and scatter through the whole,
While the eternal Dryden's worth I tell,
My lovely bard, that so lamented fell.

Clio, or the Historic Muse, by Mrs Pix, the authoress of a tragedy called "Queen Catharine, or the Ruins of Love."

Stop here, my muse, no more thy office boast,
This drop of praise is in an ocean lost;
His works alone are trumpets of his fame,
And every line will chronicle his name.

Calliope, the Heroic Muse, by Mrs C. Trotter. This is the best of these pieces. Calliope complains, that she is more unhappy than her sisters of the sock and buskin, still worshipped successfully by Vanburgh and Granville, in the epic province:

——————————Blackmore, in spite
Of me and nature, still presumes to write;
Heavy and dozed, crawls out the tedious length;
Unfit to soar, drags on with peasant strength
The weight he cannot raise.

The poem concludes,

——————————Now, you who aim,
With fading power, at bright immortal fame;
Ambitious monarchs, all whom glory warms,
Cease your vain toil, throw down your conquering arms;
Your active souls confine, since you must die
Like vulgar men, your names and actions lie
Where Trojan heroes, had not Homer lived,
Had lain forgot, nor ruined Troy survived;

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No more their glories I can e'er retrieve,
For nature can no second Dryden give.

Terpsichore, a Lyric Muse, by Mrs L. D. *extempore*. Albeit a lyric muse, Terpsichore laments in hexameters:

Just as the gods were listening to my strains,
And thousand loves danced o'er the ethereal plains,
With my own radiant hair my harp I strung,
And in glad concert all my sisters sung:
An universal harmony above
Inspired us all with gaiety and love;
A horrid sound dash'd our immortal mirth,
Wafted by sighs from the unlucky earth,
Et cætera, et cætera.

Polyhymnia, the Muse of Rhetoric, by Mrs D. E. This lady concludes the volume thus:

Incessant groans be all my rhetoric now!
My immortality I would forego,
Rather than drag this chain of endless woe.
O, mighty Father, hear a daughter's prayer,
Cure me by death from deathless sad despair!

These extracts are taken from the presentation copy of this rare book, in the library of Mr Bindley, of Somerset-House, whose liberality I have had already repeated occasion to acknowledge.

No. XIII.

VERSES

IN PRAISE OF MR DRYDEN.

To Mr DRYDEN, *by* JO. ADDISON, *Esq.*

How long, great poet, shall thy sacred lays
Provoke our wonder, and transcend our praise!

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Can neither injuries of time, or age,
Damp thy poetic heat, and quench thy rage?
Not so thy Ovid in his exile wrote;
Grief chill'd his breast, and check'd his rising thought;
Pensive and sad, his drooping muse betrays
The Roman genius in its last decays.
Prevailing warmth has still thy mind possest,
And second youth is kindled in thy breast.
Thou mak'st the beauties of the Romans known,
And England boasts of riches not her own:
Thy lines have heighten'd Virgil's majesty,
And Horace wonders at himself in thee.
Thou teachest Persius to inform our isle
In smoother numbers, and a clearer style:
And Juvenal, instructed in thy page,
Edges his satire, and improves his rage.
Thy copy casts a fairer light on all,
And still outshines the bright original.
Now Ovid boasts the advantage of thy song,
And tells his story in the British tongue;
Thy charming verse, and fair translations, show
How thy own laurel first began to grow;
How wild Lycaon, changed by angry Gods,
And frighted at himself, ran howling through the woods.
O may'st thou still the noble tale prolong,
Nor age, nor sickness, interrupt thy song!
Then may we wond'ring read, how human limbs
Have water'd kingdoms, and dissolved in streams,
Of those rich fruits that on the fertile mould
Turn'd yellow by degrees, and ripen'd into gold:
How some in feathers, or a ragged hide,
Have lived a second life, and different natures tried.
Then will thy Ovid, thus transform'd, reveal
A nobler change than he himself can tell.

Mag. Coll. Oxon. June 2, 1693.

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